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THE NEW REPUBLIC

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To the editors:

In answering Walter Laqueur's call for the rewriting of the history of World War II ("The Untold Story of World War II," *TNR*, October 14), historians will probably fall into the same trap they always have, namely, the trap of assuming the war ended. So far, they've presumed that the end of the war and the end of the combat were one and the same. They are not.

In a recent opinion poll, Adolf Hitler was ranked among the top ten most evil people in history. The evils that he spawned are the cold war and the nuclear arms race. His personal evil was replaced by two giant systems of power that struggle against each other in the race to feel safe. When and if the buttons are pushed and the missiles are loosed, World War II will have ended, and Hitler will have defeated all of us.

Thomas A. Coyner
Tombstone, Arizona

KOCH CONTROVERSY

To the editors:

Your editorial "The Koch Consensus" (October 14) insults the intelligence of black New Yorkers and shows that you, too, have fallen victim to the lemming-like idolatry of Koch by the news media.

Most blacks voted against Mayor Koch because of very real issues and very real concerns, not because of "symbols." Black people who work for a living are not dumb enough to be swayed by arguments over "poverty pimps" and "fire-next-time" rhetoric. The mayor's isolation from the brown and black communities of New York can be partly attributed to the virtual absence of representatives of those communities from his executive staff. His inability to differentiate between troublemakers and genuinely concerned citizens is also a part of the problem. There is a large distance between quotas and a commitment to enforce anti-discrimination laws. *THE NEW REPUBLIC* (and Mayor Koch) should know better. Perhaps the most troublesome issue is Mayor Koch's failure to articulate a vision of New York that exists outside Manhattan and that includes black and Hispanic people who will soon be a majority of New

York's population.

Ed Koch has the potential to be a great mayor but unless he addresses the very real concerns of black and brown New Yorkers he will only be known for his contribution to racial polarization of this city's citizens.

Joel Dreyfuss
New York, New York

To the editors:

Your editorial comment on the New York City election reads like it was dictated by Ed Koch to someone who just returned from Mars ("The Koch Consensus," October 14). I will not take the space to dispute all the faulty analysis and erroneous history. But I must point out the injustice of the reference to Albert Vann as anti-Semitic. The reference was a bigoted slander. Vann helped provide the votes that elected Elizabeth Holtzman in the September primary for district attorney of Brooklyn. He backed the Jewish candidate for comptroller—Jay Goldin—over John Dearie. He was the first person Liz Holtzman thanked in her victory speech on election night. Assemblyman Vann is no bigot. He is one of the most creative new leaders of independent black politics in New York. You owe him a profound apology.

Jack Newfield
Village Voice
New York, New York

The editors reply:

Albert Vann used to be president of the Afro-American Teachers Association. During the 1968 teachers' walkout in New York, the ATA used anti-Semitic invective as a constant tool in its strike-breaking tactics. Its official publication, *Forum*, carried an editorial charging that the only goal of Jewish teachers was "stifling our children's intellectual growth . . . the Jew, our great liberal friend of yesterday, whose cries of anguish still resound from the Steppes of Russia to the tennis courts of Forest Hills, is now our exploiter! He keeps our men and women from becoming teachers and principals and keeps our children ignorant." One of Vann's co-workers, Leslie Campbell—he had written an article for the same issue called "The Devil Can Never Educate Us"—

aired a poem on WBAL-FM: "Hey Jew boy, with that yarmulke on your head/ You pale-faced Jew boy—I wish you were dead; I can see you Jew boy—no you can't hide, I got a scoop on you—yeh, you gonna die . . . I hated you Jew boy because your hang-up was the Torah. . . ." Vann attributed the ensuing uproar to "powerful Jewish financiers." He thought the poem had "no anti-Semitic overtones." Another ATA-associated publication, *Black News*, aimed at young people, carried a Streicher-like article on "The Unholy Sons of Shylock" about "despicable Jew-boys . . . these Jewish parasites and vile money-changers. . . ."

These instances are not exceptional. The Afro-American Teachers Association was Vann's political base and the personal alliances he made there are still crucial to him. In July 1978, for example, Vann was among those leading a demonstration which the *Amsterdam News*, the city's black newspaper, headlined as "B'klyn Blacks Warn Jews." This event was part of an ongoing conflict with the borough's Hassidim, systematically exacerbated by the Black United Front, headed by the Reverend Herbert V. Daughtry, whom Vann himself has identified as an ally. Would our friend Jack Newfield consider it "a bigoted slander" to call Daughtry an anti-Semite? Liz Holtzman may indeed think of Vann as her ally. Well, as the old saw has it, politics makes strange bedfellows, but no less repellent ones.

PAT POLITICIAN

To the editors:

I was very pleased to see Fred Barnes's assessment that it is now okay for civilized people to like Senator Moynihan ("Pat Moynihan, Neoliberal," *TNR*, October 21). Whether the Senator has any presidential ambitions he alone knows, though it has seemed to some people that he would be a welcome relief to the recent string of hacks and airheads in the White House. I suppose Barnes's analysis of Moynihan's chances in a presidential race must be accurate: how could an elitist from New York with an affected speaking style, foppish mannerisms, and a strong commitment to national defense ever lead the liberal tradition in America?

John J. Reilly
Jersey City, New Jersey

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TRB

FROM WASHINGTON

PROFILE OF A PRESIDENCY

Nowhere else could the head of a great state tell reporters with a wave of his hand as he boarded a helicopter that, yes, "we are having a slight recession." Normally an admission like that is dragged out. Ronald Reagan has had only four formal press conferences in ten months. The way we get statements now is to run alongside him to the plane and record his offhand comments. Would he accept Nixon's call for an economic boycott of Libya? Not at all! His responses generally come with an amiable wave. Then he's airborne.

There is frankness and spontaneity in this, and it is often accompanied by the same simplicity in the thought patterns. Often this disturbs more complicated people. Let me set down seven instances of this.

For example, Reagan has once or twice casually proposed to set old institutions on their heads. At the Detroit convention in 1980 he worked out a plan to make former President Ford his running mate; he would have been a kind of co-president. The breathless nation watched the televised spectacular that would have changed our form of government. I'd personally like to see the thing tried, with a man of Ford's stature right there in Congress.) Then the bubble burst.

A second example was more recent—the casual suggestion to a group of editors on October 16 that he should have item veto power over congressional appropriations. This would require a constitutional amendment and it would finally settle the most bitter contest in

our separation of powers: who holds the purse strings, the White House or Congress?

A third example is on the economic front, where Reagan became a convert to the Kemp-Roth supply-side theology. Time and again Reagan has gone back to the successful tax cuts instituted by Jack Kennedy under Walter Heller's guidance, although Heller and others repeatedly point out that inflation was low then, unlike the present. Reagan has asked for tax and budget cuts, arms increases, and high interest rates simultaneously. In short, brakes and accelerator are on together. It's a wonderfully doctrinaire approach. The result today: cuts in welfare benefits for the poor, reduced taxes for the affluent, and recession for the economy.

A fourth example of Reagan's approach is in nuclear industrial power. It's a disaster area and he's going to fix it up. He announced his plans on October 8. What's holding back peaceful nuclear power? If you know Reagan, you know the answer: federal regulation! Also the ban imposed by softie Jimmy Carter on reprocessing the uranium in spent fuel rods into plutonium, which can be used for atomic bombs. He's going to end that too, and have the Treasury help bail out cities and utilities caught in the nuclear trap (just the way the government bailed out Chrysler) even though nobody yet knows how to dispose of radioactive nuclear garbage filling up the tanks outside their plants. I don't know if Congress will go along. I don't know if Reagan can get the \$100 million or so in federal money to contribute to the overall one billion dollars still needed to clean up the Three Mile Island disaster. Will towns and communities volunteer to be dump sites given this state of affairs? Nobody knows; but anyway Reagan has responded to the problem with ringing slogans. And a full-page advertisement in the October 14 *Washington Post* from "America's Electric Energy Companies" hails the program as a way to "help spark our country's economic recovery."

Reagan is going to fight the nation's crime problem, too. That's number five on my recent Reagan list. I don't know any subject that embarrasses Americans more abroad. Europeans just can't understand our crime rate. They tactfully change the subject. Canada had 52 handgun murders in a recent year, England, 55; the U.S., 10,725. The F.B.I. says violent crime rose 11 percent be-

tween 1979 and 1980. But we allow guns to be sold by 160,000 dealers and pawnshops. Reagan named Attorney General William French Smith to head a Task Force on Violent Crime, which presented its report in August. He took it to the cheering International Association of Chiefs of Police convention in New Orleans, but he cited only a few passages, and not the limited proposal for handgun control. His own solution: give any criminal who commits a crime while armed a mandatory jail sentence. Reagan was almost murdered himself—but register or control sales? Not at all! Nor did he mention the task force's recommendation to spend two billion dollars on new prisons. Prisons in America are now crowded almost beyond control. Judges let prisoners loose rather than confine them in hellholes like the riot-torn New Mexico State Penitentiary. Reagan never mentioned the prison scandal. And he's preparing to dismantle the one federal agency that controls illegal possession and trafficking in guns in the Treasury Department. It keeps proposing new regulations, you see.

The President took the same simplistic approach, in my sixth example, toward the rich-poor summit conference in Cancún: free enterprise, free markets, private investment. Are they starving in Africa? Of course we'll help. But they should remember how our brave pioneers settled America—no World Bank, no International Monetary Fund. Our "original settlers . . . faced a wilderness," he told the World Affairs Council in Philadelphia as a prelude to his Mexican visit. And how did they conquer? Why "they kept their faith." They "never stopped believing that with the freedom to try and try again, they could make tomorrow a better day. They were right." Pretty fine, eh?

Number seven is the biggest of all: Russia and the arms race. He rejoiced to see SALT II shelved. In the campaign he talked vaguely about nuclear superiority. Now he tells a group of editors that he "could see where you could have the exchange of tactical weapons in the field without it bringing either one of the major powers to pushing the button." The result is a huge new clamor in a Europe already worried that we contemplate turning their continent into a nuclear boxing ring. Factors like these make up the profile of this Administration: amiable, doctrinaire, extraordinarily simplistic.



THE NEW REPUBLIC

NOVEMBER 4, 1981

THE NORTH-SOUTH NEXUS

We never would have predicted that Ronald Reagan, the right-wing ideologue, would even agree to attend the North-South summit at Cancún. It is a hopeful sign that he went, for which we can apparently thank, primarily, Mexican President José Lopez Portillo and British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher. Ronald Reagan, the pal of millionaires, needs to learn how the other half lives—only, in the world's case, it's how the other three-quarters live. One of the great virtues of international conferences is that Presidents have to focus on what they are about, and so Mr. Reagan presumably has learned the basic facts of life in the underdeveloped world as part of his homework for Cancún. These facts include the following:

—The developing South comprises 140 countries containing 3.4 billion people (as opposed to 1.1 billion in the industrialized North), but accounts for just 20 percent of the world's wealth.

—Per capita GNP in the South varies widely (from \$15,000 in Kuwait and \$8,000 in Saudi Arabia to \$90 in Bangladesh), but averages \$597, as against \$6,468 in the North (and \$13,000 in the U.S.).

—Life expectancy in the North averages 72 years; in the South, 56. The infant mortality rate in the North is 18 deaths per 1,000 births (14 in the U.S., eight in Sweden), as against 96 in the third world (190 in Mali). Education expenditures average \$286 per person in developed countries, \$18 in the third world, and public health spending \$199 and \$6.50. The developed world

also spends \$300 per person on arms each year, as against \$28 in the developing world.

—In spite of all its woes, much of the third world has shown social and economic progress in the past two decades. Their exports of manufactured goods grew by 10 percent per year and their annual real GNP growth was 5.7 percent compared to 3.4 percent in the industrialized world. Infant mortality declined by 20 percent, and school attendance tripled.

—Nevertheless, the oil shocks of the 1970s, high inflation, declining growth rates in the consuming North, and falling commodity prices have battered third world economies. The developing world's total debt has gone from \$68 billion to \$439 billion since 1971, and its annual debt-service costs from \$8 billion to \$75 billion.

—At the bottom of the international heap, 800 million people live in what the World Bank describes as "absolute poverty," a condition of life so characterized by "malnutrition, illiteracy, and disease as to be beneath any reasonable definition of human decency." The average per capita income in the 35 poorest countries is less than \$300. The "fourth world" contains 53 percent of the world's population, counting the People's Republic of China.

Early Reagan Administration rhetoric ("the so-called third world") suggested that the incoming Republican Administration had limited awareness of the importance of the developing countries to the United

States, except possibly as they might provide the setting for the world's really important business—the conflict with the Soviet Union. Presumably the President now has been enlightened about our other stakes there. The developing world is a major export market for the United States, accounting for 39 percent of U.S. goods shipped abroad—more than Europe, Japan, and Australia combined. One out of every 20 U.S. workers has a job directly related to trade with less developed countries. The LDCs are an increasingly important source of raw materials and low-cost products that help keep down inflation here. Third world debts are owed heavily to U.S. banks, and bankruptcies there might well result in bankruptcies here. And of course, the third world is indeed the military and ideological battleground for the struggle between East and West.

AT THE OUTSET, the Reagan Administration seemed aware only of the military aspect of the struggle, and that remains its primary fixation—as when we respond to radical and fundamentalist movements in the Middle East and to insurgencies in Latin America with Awacs, B-52s, fleet maneuvers, and stepped-up military aid. Ultimately, though, the ideological struggle may prove more important, and we have not been waging it well up to now. Even though the Soviet bloc provides practically no economic assistance to the third world (three percent of the total) and though it and its allies have nothing whatever to teach developing nations about how to establish prosperous economies, the dominant ideology of the third world borrows heavily from state socialism. Its main tenets are that the poverty of have-nots is the result of exploitation by the haves, and that the North owes the South reparations—either in the form of “massive transfers of resources” or estab-

lishment of a “new international economic order,” the rules for which should be established in “global negotiations” overseen by the United Nations, where the third world has a voting majority.

In whole or in part, this ideology is now virtually gospel among third world intellectuals and government officials, even in countries (Mexico, for example) which do not practice socialism at home. It's especially ironic that members of OPEC also support the third world ideology, when that organization's price increases are responsible for so much of the third world's woes. It's not, however, surprising: by masquerading as friends and ideological allies of the LDCs, the OPEC nations hope to escape blame for what they have caused. In large part the trick has worked. The OPEC price increases of the 1970s caused a tenfold increase in the balance of payments deficits of third world countries, but Saudi Arabia will be at Cancún pretending to be an LDC itself, and it is fawned over for its apparent generosity in giving away 2.3 percent of its GNP in foreign assistance—three times the U.N.'s prescribed goal.

Whether out of guilt or cynicism or genuine belief, many Westerners, too, have adopted the basic themes of third world ideology, especially the notion that the world's economic problems should be solved in “global negotiations.” We are encouraged that the Reagan Administration has not chosen that path, even at the risk of having to travel alone for awhile. We do not think the Administration has been as skillful as it might be in getting its message across, or that the U.S. is as generous in providing foreign aid as it should be, but somebody must tell the truth to the world, and we are glad that the Administration is doing so.

The truth is that the South is not poor because the North is rich, and the third world will not become more developed simply by soaking the first world. The

South is poor because it is only now emerging from historical conditions of ignorance, disease, and feudalism (aggravated in some cases, but not caused, by colonialism). LDCs will become prosperous only as other civilizations have: through discipline, good management, and inventiveness. Luck, in the form of abundant natural resources, certainly helps the development process, but it isn't necessary, as Japan's example will attest. Capitalism does not guarantee success, as the Latin despotisms attest, but any country choosing a system to bet on would be wise to choose capitalism



over state socialism. The third world's recent economic success stories—Taiwan, South Korea, Singapore, Thailand, Sri Lanka, and the Ivory Coast—are all examples of capitalist development. It's instructive that the two loudest third world advocates of the New International Economic Order—Tanzania and Algeria—are, respectively, economic and social disasters, both on the state socialist model.

IN HIS pre-Cancún speech in Philadelphia on October 15, President Reagan rather smugly advised the third world to emulate the U.S. model of development—odd advice from a man who is normally a passionate believer in American exceptionalism. The trouble with the U.S. model is that it takes in more than just Yankee ingenuity, political democracy, and individual initiative. Historically speaking, it also includes finding a virgin continent rich in game, timber, and minerals; clearing off the indigenous people; importing capital and skilled workers from Europe; and having a large share of agricultural production based for 200 years on slave labor. Such admonitions do little to enhance the credibility of Mr. Reagan's underlying message, which is a sensible one. It is that the way to promote development in the third world is not primarily by massive transfers of wealth, but by opening up markets, by encouraging private investment, and by targeting government aid to countries and projects that give hope for self-sustaining progress. Mr. Reagan's speech contained a riveting set of statistics which the Cancún summiteers deserve to hear repeated: the United States buys approximately one-half of all manufactured goods that non-OPEC developing countries export to the industrialized world, even though our market is only one-third of the size of the total industrialized world market. In the last two years alone, these same developing countries earned more from exports to the United States than the entire developing world has received from the World Bank in the last 36 years.

Yet important as it is for the world to hear the U.S. message, the Reagan Administration is going to have to do more than talk to make other countries listen. It is going to have to deliver on Mr. Reagan's vague pledges in Philadelphia, which means opening markets, expanding private investment, and creating new aid projects to help third world countries meet their food and energy needs. The Administration is right in believing that U.N.-sponsored global negotiations will lead merely to political posturing and fruitless confrontation. But to undercut demands for global talks, the U.S. needs to make specific proposals in the forums it controls: the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade, the International Monetary Fund, and the World Bank. The U.S., as the world's largest food exporter and provider of food aid, should be leading the movement to establish a world emergency food reserve, instead of resisting it.

Finally, Mr. Reagan is right in saying that all the world will benefit if the U.S. gets its economic house in order. High U.S. interest rates will cost some countries more money in debt service payments than they'll pay OPEC in increased oil charges. At the same time, it is no more necessary that the United States slash foreign aid to the bone to get the economy in order than it is that we cut food stamps or school lunches for poor Americans. The United States now spends a paltry .2 percent of its GNP on foreign assistance, and much of that goes to a limited circle of strategically placed allies (Israel, Egypt, Jordan, Pakistan, the Philippines). By comparison, Sweden, Norway, Denmark, and the Netherlands all spend .7 percent, Germany spends .4 percent, and even traditionally stingy France and Japan are pledging to double aid to .7 and .6 respectively, over the next five years. It's true that the French and Japanese markets are not nearly as open as ours to third world products, but that just suggests a worthwhile agenda for us: we get them to lower trade barriers, while we increase direct foreign aid. The U.S. spent 2.9 percent of its GNP during the Marshall Plan years to help Europe rebuild after World War II, and we gained a worldwide reputation for generosity. We can't afford that much now, but we can afford more than we spend, and we need a reputation for generosity again if we are to save the world for "free enterprise"—and, more important, for freedom.

DAYAN'S DREAM

Moshe Dayan was the first child to be born in the first kibbutz, that daring innovation of Labor Zionism according to which toil would redeem the Land and the Land redeem the toilers. Sadly, toil would prove to be insufficient; armed struggle was required as well. All of this was limned in Dayan's life of farming and soldiering, an exemplar to—and also of—a people thought to have become, in the long years of its dispersion, utterly inept at such activities.

Dayan was the new Jew who, instead of experiencing the ancient yearning for Zion as a spiritual and even abstracted exercise, had a physical romance with it. If he spent most of his life either helping to wrest it from the British or defend it against the Arabs, he was not blind to the lure the land had for others besides the Jews. He knew this reality deeply, in some measure because of his archaeological obsessions. He was perhaps the most accomplished of amateurs, intuitively shrewd and very learned as well, in a field which, it is commonly said, is every Israeli's hobby. So, for all of his convictions about a life given to the vocation of the plow and to the necessity of the gun, Dayan was a man of old-fashioned culture, paradoxically very much

like that of the Jews of Europe. He was of a generation sparsely schooled, but well educated in the English poets and the Russian novelists, like his late comrade-antagonist, Yigal Allon, and his surviving companion from the heady days of the Ben Gurion apprenticeship, Shimon Peres. Like these contemporaries he had an elegant yet spare style of writing and a subtle command of history that gave his words a resonance to complement his acts.

MUCH HAS been written these past days about Dayan's readiness for death. In his book of memoirs (remarkable among other reasons for its devastating, and pathetic, portrait of Menachem Begin as well as of Jimmy Carter and Fritz Mondale) he seemed at once brooding and stoic, prepared to die. This should hardly be surprising—and not only because of his recent bout with cancer, or the intimations of mortality a battle-scarred officer had had many times in a military career of more than 40 years. He was ready for death because he had accomplished those aims in his life, foreshadowed in an intense and spirited Galilee childhood, before the water ever ran to the arid areas, and before the swamps were drained in the malarial wet ones. He and his cohorts had triumphed over nature made niggardly and ungenerous by indifference; and over adversaries who refused to share the territory of historic Palestine, which destinies—antique and modern—had determined could not but be shared. These facts were once only a Zionist's crazy dream. Because that dream had been realized, Dayan was encouraged to think inventively and flexibly about Israel's relation to the Arabs of Palestine, both those on the "other" side of the Jordan, as he put it, and on "this" side. Golda Meir was heard more than once to complain that Dayan—to whom she was fiercely loyal (especially in his disgrace after the reverses of the Yom Kippur War), more loyal than he was to her—was not so much flexible as he was mercurial. This was an assessment more of his personality than of his policies, which were, in any case, Labor's. But when Labor fell in 1977 and Begin came to power, offering Dayan the foreign ministry, the firstborn of Socialist Zionism easily accommodated himself to its antagonists on the Revisionist Jewish right.

But Dayan was never a captive of, or even really a believer in, ideologies. He took the opportunities as

they came—which did not make him an opportunist. For historians will credit Dayan with seeing the possibilities a Begin government presented for reaching something akin to the Camp David accords, long before Sadat ever thought to come to Jerusalem. When Dayan became convinced that his new chief was impeding further progress toward a settlement, he (like another volatile military man, Ezer Weizman) left the Cabinet and entered a period of political isolation that ended only with his death.

EXACTLY WHAT plausible progress did Dayan imagine was being impeded? Mostly he thought the Likud pointlessly provocative toward the Arabs under Israel's rule, believing that this provocation was not enhancing the security interests of the nation, either in the territories or in the international arena. These differences with Begin magnified Dayan's deserved reputation as someone who had genuine empathy with the Arabs, an empathy founded on appreciation of their culture and also on many friendships among them. The presence at his funeral in Nahalal of hundreds of grieving Arabs testifies to these friendships. But Dayan had no illusions about the Arabs, nor about those self-interested outsiders all too eager to persuade the world of Arab eagerness for peace. He knew and repeatedly said that there was not an Arab polity whose modes and circumstances were other than violent. He saw the specter of such violence spilling over into Jerusalem and the rest of Israel as the inevitable consequence of Arab sovereignty in the West Bank. This is one reason why he would never have assented to an arrangement in which any but the Israeli defense forces would guarantee security in the Holy Land west of the Jordan River. It is a part of Dayan's legacy that no conceivable Israeli government would renounce its obligation to provide an adequate defense for its people. He would have resented those insincere tributes paid him recently—which implied that he would have settled for less—seeing them in part as yet another weapon in the propaganda onslaught against both Israel and Begin. He did not relish being made a hero of Israel's fatuously righteous critics.

Moshe Dayan knew the poetry of Nobel Laureate Nelly Sachs. Once, sitting with an editor of this journal, he recited from memory one of her poems:

I do not want to sing you battle hymns,
Brothers and sisters, outcasts standing before the doors
of the world,
Heirs of the redeemers of light, who tore out of the sand
The buried rays
Of eternity.

Dayan did not want to sing those hymns. He pursued every practical avenue to peace, and was certain that facile and unrealistic solutions to complicated and real conflict led inevitably to war and to death.



COMING

**Ronald Steel on
European Neutralism.**

Greece takes a leap to the left.

PAPANDREOU TO POWER

THE GREEK election of October 18 brought to power the Panhellenic Socialist Movement, known as Pasok. Its leader, Andreas Papandreou, who styles himself a Marxist, is the new Prime Minister. He won 48 percent of the vote, doubling his strength from the last election, in 1977, and will have an absolute majority of 180 deputies in the 300-member Parliament. The pro-Soviet Communist Party received 12 percent. The centrist factions were crushed. The New Democracy Party, which had held the majority since 1974, received only 38 percent of the vote. The combined vote for the left came to over 60 percent, but Pasok can govern without Communist support, which Papandreou never solicited. Many factors account for this remarkable swing, in which almost 25 percent of the voters moved to Pasok from the center and even from the right. The most important one is that Pasok is not like any other Western Socialist party. It is a populist movement that straddles the left and the right.

Throughout the electoral campaign the protagonist was Andreas Papandreou. He managed to do what no other modern Greek political leader had ever succeeded in doing: he fashioned a mass movement under his personal control. Pasok has a strong national organization with branches and militants throughout Greece. Its platform, under the slogans of "nationalism" and "socialism," voiced discontents that have accumulated over decades. Under the heading of "nationalism," Pasok is against the Atlantic alliance (which it says does not serve the defense of Greece); against American bases in Greece (which it says serve only American interests and endanger the security of Greece); against the European Common Market (which it says undermines economic development, hurts the farmers, and subjugates the country to European political imperatives); against Israel (which it calls the lance of American imperialism); and against the presence of U.S. naval forces in the eastern Mediterranean (which it sees as a threat to the sovereignty of the Mediterranean states). Papandreou appealed to traditionalist emotion by taking an intransigent stance vis-à-vis Turkey. He even praised the army, the same army that put him in jail in 1967, as the "guardian of the integrity" of the country. It was this unheralded wave of nationalism—of which anti-Americanism was but a manifestation—that provided the grist for Papandreou's rhetoric and, as it turned out, his victory. It even earned him the backing of many in the Greek Orthodox Church.

"Socialism," like "nationalism," was a catchall label. It combined a number of familiar grievances (against

the establishment, the banks, the monopolies, the monied interests, the big cities, the tourists, the multinationals) with a series of promises that appealed to as many groups as possible. Pasok pledged to do away with pollution; to pay the farmers more for their produce; to create a better urban transportation system; to provide for cheap housing; to set up a national health system; to extend social security; to raise wages; to increase pensions for the retired; to improve the financial status of army officers and army personnel; and more. But its three key provisions are the socialization of the economy and the creation of farmer cooperatives; rapid decentralization to achieve popular control and management at the level of localities and municipalities and the firms; and *laokratia*—a vague term that suggests direct governance by the people as opposed to representative democracy.

On the right, the leaders of the New Democracy Party defended the government's seven-year record, which by all accounts was impressive: domestic tranquility, a republican constitution, an excellent record in the protection of individual rights and political freedoms, full employment and a growing economy with a per capita income that has surpassed that of Spain and is rapidly approaching that of Italy, and membership in the Common Market, which Greece formally joined on January 1 and which may yet produce substantial long-range benefits for the country. The record was marred by inflation (averaging about 22 percent a year), urban pollution, and a bureaucracy badly in need of reform and trimming down. The usual irritants of a rapidly modernizing society—uncertainty about prices of agricultural goods, the unplanned exodus from the countryside into the towns, insufficient urban transportation facilities and housing, urban pollution—were deftly exploited by Papandreou.

WITH AN assured majority in Parliament, Papandreou will seek to consolidate his power at first rather than endanger it by taking steps that will antagonize the U.S. or Western European countries. He has been careful to present himself as a "Mitterrand Socialist" and has succeeded remarkably in allaying the fears and suspicions of Europeans and American observers and officials. *Laokratia* and decentralization will give him and his party leaders the bureaucratic means to control the countryside. Only when the domestic front is secure will Papandreou move to implement his foreign policy plans—to remove Greece from the Atlantic alliance and NATO, pull out of the Common Market, and search for a nonaligned status which in effect would have to mean new alliances in the eastern Mediterranean and possibly beyond.

The international stakes for Western Europe and the U.S. are high, especially in view of the continuing crisis in the Middle East. Those who know Papandreou think that he will find this challenging rather than restraining. The only restraint may prove to be the

President of the Republic, Constantine Caramanlis, the former leader of the now politically weakened New Democracy Party. As the first Prime Minister after the overthrow of the colonels in 1974, he has enormous moral prestige. And as President, he has powers that the Greek Constitution reserves to him personally—to dissolve the Parliament and call for elections, to call for referendums, and to invoke emergency powers in case of serious domestic disorders. He was conspicuous by his silence—a silence shared, as noted, by most Western political leaders. He is, however, deeply attached to the Common Market and the Atlantic alliance. The stakes are so high that the wheels that will decide the future course for Greece may begin to spin only now.

ROY MACRIDIS

Roy Macridis is professor of politics at Brandeis University.

The slush pile springs to life.

WRITERS' BLOC

New York

IN THE central well of the Roosevelt Hotel lobby in Manhattan, a huge green and white banner proclaimed: AMERICAN WRITERS CONGRESS. Scores of glittering literary personages had lent their names to the Inviting Committee—Mailer, Styron, Barthelme, Barth, Doctorow, Vonnegut, Galbraith, Malamud, Irving, Oates, Robert Penn Warren, and more—though few of them bestowed their physical presence on the event itself. The funding had come from the Mobil and Ford Foundations; from Warner-Lambert, the drug multinational; from Hearst, Time, and Playboy; from the federal government's own National Endowment for the Arts. Thousands thronged the floor, trying to pick up their credentials. The organizers locked arms to keep them out, begged them to come back later, implored them to listen to the proceedings on the radio. Were all these people writers? "It's the slush pile come to life," said one gloomy observer. "Well, it might be radical, but it's not chic," said another. "The huddled masses yearning to be published," said a third.

The affair was sponsored by the Nation Institute, an affiliate of the *Nation* magazine. The "Call" printed in the Congress program decried the "debasing of literary culture" and a phenomenon called "the censorship of slow-moving books"; and it pointed to the threats of "increasing commercialism" on the one hand and the "rise of the right" on the other. The Call turned, as if

for inspiration, to the Writers Congresses of the 1930s, which, it said, were a "reaction to the Depression at home and fascism abroad." Those Writers Congresses were wholly owned subsidiaries of the Communist Party; they had, in the discreet phrase of today, "hidden agendas." By contrast, the agenda of the 1981 Writers Congress was positively flaunted.

LEADING OFF the Congress was the disembodied voice of Philip Agee, relayed by telephone; no one represented an adversary position. There was an "Evening of Solidarity with Silenced Korean Writers"—South Korean, of course. There was a special press conference for Imamu Amiri Baraka (Le Roi Jones), accompanied by his attorney William Kunstler, and his wife, whom he was once arrested for beating up. ("Fascism is coming," Mrs. Baraka informed the assembled reporters matter-of-factly, "and soon the secret police will shoot down our children in the streets.") The subject of a panel on "The Media and U.S. Foreign Policy" was announced as follows: "Discussion in American media of the 'New World Information Order' has focused almost exclusively on a peripheral issue—government licensing of journalists. . . . Lost in the uproar has been the real issue: the western monopoly on the media. . . ." A panel on "American Foreign Policy and Writers' Rights Abroad" addressed the question: "How does U.S. policy support repressive regimes?" No "whether," "when," or even "why" here—just "how."

At the panel on "The Media and U.S. Foreign Policy," Edward Said drew a parallel between the relationship of the American "establishment" press with the U.S. government and that of Tass and *Pravda* with the Kremlin. This provoked Karen DeYoung, as foreign editor of the *Washington Post* a very apologetic representative of that establishment, to note that there is a difference between a free and a controlled press. The audience hissed her. The Communist world and the third world have an official press, she said, whereas we have a "cultural bias toward objectivity." She was at pains to state that she was making "no value judgment." But when she suggested that, with this idiosyncratic "cultural bias" of ours, we don't do such a bad job of reporting on the third world, she was, again, roundly hissed, after which she said, "I'd better stop before they start throwing tomatoes at me."

On the whole, at this Congress, the rank and file was far more "radical," at least in expression, than either the organizers or many of the panelists, a fact that was freely admitted in private conversation by Victor Navasky, the *Nation's* affable editor. Notable in this regard were the ultra-feminists, who swamped a suite at the hotel scheduled for a panel on pornography. They were removed to a union hall near Ninth Avenue, around the corner from a theater offering "Seven Live Sex Acts on Stage." At the union hall, various speakers denounced capitalism, socialism, sex-

ism, "looksism," sexual taboos, the Imperial Penis which rules the world, and the basic structure of all societies. Although contending that "all revolutions had come to nothing," one speaker felt that civil disobedience was a "common-law extension of the First Amendment." Panel-goers had been greeted with leaflets announcing that "Aryeh Neier hates women," and, although Neier did not appear himself, his surrogate, Ken Norwick, a consultant to the New York Civil Liberties Union, warned his listeners, in effect, that if they were to implement any of their planned "organized vandalism" or invasion-of-privacy techniques against pornography, they might live to regret it, as these same techniques might be used against them.

ONE PANEL THAT Aryeh Neier did attend, since he was its chairman, was the one on "American Foreign Policy and Writers' Rights Abroad." Panelist Joseph Skvorecky, a Czechoslovak refugee, did not appear as advertised (nor did the celebrated Soviet exile Joseph Brodsky appear for the poetry panel), but Neier, as vice chairman of the Helsinki Watch Committee for America, felt obliged to point out to the audience that if Skvorecky were there he would tell them there was repression in Czechoslovakia. Neier then steered the focus back to the United States for not having made the proper attempts to free imprisoned Czechoslovak writers, and all was going well until an elderly man rose from the floor to announce, to enthusiastic applause, that he had been in Spain during the Spanish Civil War. "I can tell you that in Spain then, and today, people are telling you about the Soviet menace," he said, and added, in stirring tones, "But I want to say here and now that those who make that claim are *themselves* the menace!" Here the ovation was thunderous. Neier promptly slipped in, "I want to be lumped among those who consider the Soviet Union a threat." This led to demands that he be removed as moderator, and when this demand was not met, he was simply harassed by many of the free-speech enthusiasts in the audience. Speaking privately to a reporter after the panel discussion, Neier observed, "They don't want to hear anything critical of the Soviet Union. That's what's wrong with these people."

What did the stars of the Congress have to say for themselves in their typically brief appearances? The telephoned voice of Philip Agee said that although proposed congressional legislation would have an undesirable "chilling" effect on investigative reporting, no U.S. law would stop him from going to Nicaragua and Granada and telling them how the C.I.A. worked. He was already cooperating with the El Salvador Revolutionary Front in Europe, he said, and proposed that the Writers Congress should consider joining in a "massive protest" by exposing the name of one C.I.A. operative abroad. Everything Agee said was either listened to in worshipful silence or greeted with warm applause. E.L. Doctorow told a panel on history: "Rus-

sians write people out of the Soviet Encyclopedia, but we've always done exactly the same thing."

Kurt Vonnegut was brief. He told a panel on local censorship (co-sponsored by PEN) that his fourth-grade civics teacher had taught him that the First Amendment said, "Anyone should be able to say anything he wants to," and that he had yet to see any reason to change his opinion. Michael P. Farris, a general counsel of the Moral Majority and a constitutional lawyer, flummoxed the panel by saying he had supported Madeleine Murray O'Hare in her crusade to ban public prayer from the schools. Joseph Papp, at another panel, called for no censorship whatever and appealed for public support for the arts (though this did not inhibit him from taking some of the private support he receives for his New York Shakespeare Festival, which raises money for theater, and giving it to the organizers of the Congress). Arthur Miller, who was not on the inviting committee, said at another panel that the *New York Times* exercises more control over the American theater than any Soviet institution does over the Soviet theater. (The *Times* was under attack for many transgressions during the Congress, and one entire panel was devoted to "Homophobia at the *New York Times*.")

Jules Feiffer was frivolous: why should right-wing writers be having all the fun? For George Will and George Gilder to have fun was "unseemly." For Norman Podhoretz and Irving Kristol to have fun was a "violation of the spirit of fun." Toni Morrison was grave: "The life of American Writers is under attack."

Except for Agee's, these musings of the famous had little to do with the substance, and nothing to do with the tone, that I encountered as I wandered from panel to hearing to panel. The Congress, its pretenses notwithstanding, was not concerned with literary or cul-

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tural questions at all, but was an entirely political undertaking. The principal characteristic of the participants was a virulent hatred of the country for which the American Writers Congress was named—not only its policies but its institutions as well.

OF THE 13 resolutions approved by the Plenary Session in the ballroom of the Roosevelt Hotel on the third and final night, the only two to pass unanimously were the one on “First Amendment Rights”—which worried, in somewhat overwrought terms, about official efforts to “eviscerate the First Amendment”—and the “Resolution on Latin America,” which begins: “Never before in history have Latin Americans felt so threatened by U.S. foreign policy as they do today. . . .” There was no “Resolution on the Soviet Union” (or “Afghanistan” or “Poland”); nor was there, at any time during the Congress, any formal recognition that the plight of writers in these countries might merit a resolution (or even a panel) of its own. But the closing session did approve resolutions on lesbian and gay rights, minority rights, imprisoned writers (the list was provided by PEN), El Salvador, a “Communications Bill of Rights,” a “Literature Defense Network,” small-press poetry, and libel; and approval was voted for the principle of a National Writers Union, and for a proposal to “tithe” the royalties of such writers who have an income for the benefit of those whose works are published by “alternative institutions.” Late that night, when the crowd in the Grand Ballroom had dropped from 1,500 to about 200, the last item on the order of business, just after the adoption of the “Resolution on Southern Africa,” was the empowerment of a “Continuation Committee.” Ann Marie Cunningham, the project director for the Congress, told me on the telephone several days later that the Resolutions Committee would be “redrafting” not only the 20 resolutions that never came before the floor but some of the 13 that did—because of “clumsy wording” and such. All the resolutions, in their redrafted form, are to be mailed to the 2,500 Congress registrants, and only when a resolution has been approved by mail by a majority of them will it be considered well and truly adopted. This complicated procedural improvisation will give the organizers of this Congress for writers’ rights and against censorship an opportunity to review the last and most embarrassing resolution it adopted. This one called for “a boycott”—not of South Africa itself, but “of all writers, entertainers, media people, sports figures, and artists who go to South Africa or who by word or deed lend credibility to South Africa’s attempts to lessen its isolation and to create a favorable international image for its apartheid regime.”

The most interesting person to take part in the American Writers Congress was Jerzy Kosinski, who allowed his name to be used as a member of the Inviting Committee and actually showed up, although he

declined to take part in any panels. The truly Grand Absentee at the Congress was the Soviet Union; but Jerzy Kosinski is a Pole, and he grew up and was educated in this other world, attending, in fact, the Communist Party school. So he knows what this other world is out there. And he knows what it is like. I taxed him with this.

Well, he explained, as a two-time past president of PEN, which co-sponsored some of the debates, he felt he should attend. But, this said, the whole affair seemed to have disgusted him. “It was more political than any writers’ conference I ever saw behind the Iron Curtain,” he said. “And the union! They think a union will help them. They are children of a welfare state. Worse, they are children of a middle-class, credit-card state. They want a scholarship! They feel they are *entitled* to be subsidized. The state *owes* them a subsidy and the right to be published. The whole thing is profoundly offensive. With this mentality they should join the Writers’ Union on Gorky Street in Moscow.” He laughed with a hint of bitterness. “Except they would find that when you join the Writers’ Union on Gorky Street the state expects something in return.”

RICHARD GRENIER

Richard Grenier is a novelist and a former reporter for Westinghouse Broadcasting, the London *Financial Times*, and Agence France-Presse. He writes about film for *Commentary*.

A tale of three conferences.

BREAKING THE MOLD?

London

EVERY YEAR Britain’s political parties repair to the island’s somewhat forlorn seaside resorts to troop their colors, parade their champions, and enjoy a bit of intramural sport. This year there promised to be something more than the usual ceremony. Radical forces are at work on all sides of British politics—among them a new party, the Social Democrats. The party conferences offered a chance to gauge whether or not those forces—in the current Fleet Street catchphrase—are “breaking the mold” of British political life.

Labour Party delegates went south to Brighton on September 27. They filed from the boardwalk into the conference hall, past strolling pensioners, celebrity watchers, and manifesto hawkers. Ten years ago, most delegates to a Labour Party conference had the

bad teeth, florid faces, and non-U accents that mark the industrial working class. Today the public-sector look predominates. It has its variety: rumpled suits for the white-collar workers; scruffy jeans and running shoes for the polytechnic graduates turned activists.

This year's Labour conference might have been expected to be a rally against the Thatcher government for Britain's economic misfortunes: 12 percent unemployment, inflation stuck in double digits, a marketplace strewn with failed firms. Instead, it was the occasion for another round in Labour's pervasive and bitter factional struggle. The moderate Denis Healey managed to defeat the doctrinaire Tony Benn by a fraction of one percent of the vote in the contest for the party's deputy leadership, and some of the more truculent leftists were removed from the party's executive committee. But many of the left's resolutions—including those favoring unilateral disarmament and withdrawal from the European Economic Community—passed handily. The result, in the words of one newspaper headline, was "Bennism Without Benn."

A GOOD MANY decent democrats remain active in the Labour Party, and one can appreciate why. It has been much more than a political party—it was an intellectual, cultural, and moral school that taught and even shaped the modern world. Keir Hardy, the Fabians, Nye Bevan, the London School of Economics, Hugh Gaitskell, Anthony Crosland: these are names that ring. American liberalism was more influenced by British Labour than most suspect. But Brighton left even an admiring friend of the Labour tradition gloomy about its prospects for recovery.

In the floor debates, speaker after speaker evoked the hostility, the conspiratorial suspicion, the devotion to wooden Marxist formulas that are the stock in trade of the antidemocratic left. The racial clashes earlier this year in Brixton and Merseyside were not a spontaneous outburst against the failures of Thatcher's economic program—they were deliberately provoked by the police. The NATO plan to station missiles in Britain is not to be understood as a response—even if misguided—to the deployment of Soviet SS-20 missiles in Europe, but as an American plot to subvert British independence. Reports of public anxiety about some aspects of Labour Party leftism are just the work of the capitalist press. And so on.

Speakers at a meeting of the Labour Party Youth League—the young Trotskyites who provide the left with much of its activist cadre—mocked Party moderates who would resist "entryism," the genteel British euphemism for infiltration. What we do is perfectly democratic, scolded a hard-eyed young militant; why don't the moderates assign some of their people to contest control of party branches around the country? The answer might be that the decent, beer-loving, and often provincial folk upon whom the Labour tradition has long rested don't go "parachuting" into distant

constituencies on orders from a factional steering committee.

Not only does the far left have the cadres; the opposing Labour Party moderates seem to have no alternative values or ideas. The democratic spirit of the British working class could possibly be marshaled to oppose the "termite tactics" of the Trots. But moderate leaders seem to prefer a discreet resistance that won't provoke left-wing tantrums. It's a tactic that will probably fail to inspire any real popular support.

But the Labour Party has an even deeper problem. There is not much in its cultural or intellectual tradition to provide grounds of principle on which to make a stand against the corrosive criticism of the Western style mixed economy that pours forth from the Marxist left. The moral ascendancy of the Labour left dates from 1959, when Hugh Gaitskell was rebuffed in his attempts at modifying Clause Four of the Labour Party constitution, which strongly commits the party to public ownership of the economy. (That same year, in Bad Godesberg, German Socialists broke with 19th-century dogmas of state economic control.) So Labour's moderates have long been following a political course for which they have established no legitimate, coherent, principled defense. Their apologies for a mixed economy sound like a tawdry compromise with evil. They have not found it in themselves to say with conviction that, in some of its forms, private enterprise is not only flexible and efficient but also creative and even virtuous. In a party with a moralistic tradition, this leaves them vulnerable to the cadres of extremism.

B RITAIN'S NEW party, the Social Democrats, grew out of divisions of the Labour Party. Now it is struggling to rise from these origins to establish a truly distinctive position on the political spectrum. Much of this, so far, is a matter of style. Instead of the traditional seaside conference, SDP supporters met three weeks ago for a series of media events that rolled south from Scotland to a windup at Westminster Central Hall in London. The hall is owned by the Methodist Church, and its solemnly vaulted auditorium was an apt setting for two days of earnest exhortation and pledges of national renewal.

The Social Democratic Party is trying desperately to seem modern, which is not as silly as it may sound for a party that wants Britain to be modern. The British press is endlessly titillated by arrangements that permit members to pay their dues by credit card. On the face of it, the SDP is a party of personalities—Roy Jenkins, David Owen, William Rodgers, and Shirley Williams—without the encumbrances of a constitution or a written manifesto. And all of them are talking furiously to the camera lens.

But, despite appearances, the Social Democrats have already grown to a certain complexity. An American finds them an odd combination of mild neoconservati-

vism and Common Cause liberalism—with a dash of Allard Lowenstein's pandemonium. Their meeting hall is full of people in tweeds and walking shoes who oppose blood sports and applaud exuberantly at the announcement that smoking will not be permitted. Then Shirley Williams, who suggests a chairperson from the League of Women Voters, castigates the Labour Party for having adopted the spirit of "the jackboot and the commissar." American liberalism has exorcised that kind of talk, but in Britain they've had to relearn it.

Except for this, and some sharp jabs at the Tories, the speeches of SDP leaders are somewhat bloodless. For his keynote address, Roy Jenkins offers an elegantly constructed case for a tax on inflationary wage payments. It would impress a group of Eurocrats in Brussels—his last post—but will it move the masses? There are proposals for proportional representation in parliamentary elections, for reform of labor legislation, for a "balanced" foreign policy, for programs for unemployed youth. No demagoguery here—no raw meat flung American-style to potential supporters. That could be a problem. Just who are the SDP's supporters, anyway?

The crowds of the worthy and well-informed at the SDP's events could inspire delusions among its leaders like those that beguiled John Anderson's campaign in the U.S. last year. But there are other voices in the SDP, if its leaders can resist intoxication long enough to hear them. Of the 22 Members of Parliament who have come over to the SDP, the largest group is from working-class districts in the industrial north. Like Tom McNally of Stockport, once groomed by Jim Callaghan for leadership in the Labour Party, they worry that "local SDP branches have found the essentially middle-class and apolitical wave of first recruits too agreeable," and urge that "there is a rich seam of support that needs to be tapped among industrial workers." The SDP wants Britain to enter the post-industrial era—but if it forgets that today much of Britain still remains an older industrial society, it will founder at the ballot box.

ON TO BLACKPOOL and the Tories. The tables in the lounge of the Imperial Hotel have plenty of ice buckets planted with upturned bottles of Moët Chandon. But the conversation of the dark-suited men in the dining room is sober. The Thatcher government is under siege. "The Most Unpopular British Prime Minister Since Opinion Poll Records Began" trumpets a headline in the *Times*.

Mrs. Thatcher argues publicly that her experiment in imposing a free enterprise discipline on the British economy is "within an ace of success." Her advisers complain that, in some respects, the experiment has never been attempted. She has had little support from the civil service or the grandees of her own party, and has not been able successfully to restrain public expen-

diture or taxation. Her government has spent more money on publicly owned industries than any in history and the full weight of her monetary restrictions has therefore fallen on the private sector. Conservative rule, paradoxically, has seen the public sector strengthened, relatively, at the expense of private enterprise.

AMERICANS find Mrs. Thatcher a familiar enough political type. It is hard to appreciate what a radical force she and her supporters are in Tory party politics. The Tory paternalists hadn't a hope of dislodging her at Blackpool, but ex-Prime Minister Edward Heath and the young Tory "blue-chippers"—a group of M.P.s so called on account of their good breeding— inveighed mightily against her policies. It was the old Tory culture against the new Tory politics: an upper-class tradition of moderation (or opportunism) against the New Model Army of free enterprise and monetarism.

Monetarist theories have begun to bedevil the Thatcher government, as they have the Reagan Administration. They haven't yet worked, and not very many people understand how they're supposed to work. It's hard to rally the public behind a target figure for Sterling M3. The economists and fiscal technocrats who gain ascendancy in a government obsessed with money supply have little knack for explaining how all that relates to the kind of society people want. Mrs. Thatcher holds forth in Churchillian echoes about struggle and responsibility, but hers is a lonely and sometimes strident voice. And it is neither likely nor desirable that a New Britain should be built from the top down by a narrow class of entrepreneurs and technocrats.

But give Mrs. Thatcher her due. She is probably helping, as much as the SDP, to break the mold of British politics. The SDP today is immensely popular, pulling support toward the center from both the Labour Party and the Tories. Mrs. Thatcher has lost her soft support, but holds the solid loyalty of the Tory rank and file. And some of her arguments are taking hold—even an unlikely figure such as the SDP's David Owen now exhorts his audiences that "we have got to earn our own living." An election fought between the SDP-Liberal Alliance and the new Tories would be an election about how Britain should enter the future. It would be an election fought among democrats, about well-framed issues—without the sterile sloganeering that has dominated the recent past. The mold of British politics indeed seems to be breaking, and there is some possibility that its new form will offer something to the world, just as the old one did.

PENN KEMBLE

Penn Kemble is the president of the Foundation for Democratic Education.

Iran's clerical masters tighten their grip on chaos.

THE DAY OF THE MULLAHS

BY SHAUL BAKHASH

"THIS WEEK, an Iranian firing squad executed its 35 millionth victim, thereby wiping out the entire population of Iran. The firing squad then committed suicide, leaving the country completely uninhabited and ready for a new regime. We hope it's a good one." This ghoulish routine on a recent "Saturday Night Live" program was disturbingly close to the mark. Executions and assassinations of everyone from members of the dissident People's Mujahedeen to 14-year-old boys and girls labeled as "infidels" are proliferating at an astounding pace. Since the dismissal of President Abolhassan Bani-Sadr on June 22, the regime has killed more than 1,800 people for "waging war against God," a greater number than were executed throughout the entire world in 1980, according to Amnesty International. In September alone, more than 600 died before the Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini's firing squads. Thousands more have been imprisoned. More than 3,350 people have been executed in Iran since the start of the revolution in January 1979.

Most of the violence has been directed against leftist supporters of former President Bani-Sadr, particularly members of the People's Mujahedeen. Veterans of the protracted struggle against the Shah, the Mujahedeen allied themselves with Bani-Sadr, whose preference for muted Islam and conventional third world socialism aroused the ire of the mullahs who control the Islamic Republic Party. When Bani-Sadr escaped from Iran on June 22, Massoud Rajavi, the leader of the Mujahedeen, followed him into exile in Paris.

But Bani-Sadr has done little to quell the violence. On August 23 he told the *New York Times* that Khomeini's regime would collapse if its five leading officials were killed. The Mujahedeen responded by stepping up their campaign of bombings and assassinations against government officials. They and other opposition groups have killed more than 300 politicians and clerics tied to the regime, including two of the five men targeted by Bani-Sadr—President Ali Rajai and Prime Minister Javad Bahonar. Among other prominent victims of the opposition's attacks have been Ayatollah Mohammed Beheshti, head of the ruling Islamic Republic Party, four Cabinet members, the Chief of Police, the Prosecutor General, and many lesser

clerics and Revolutionary Guards as well.

During a recent visit to United Nations headquarters in New York, Iran's Foreign Minister, Mir Hussein Moussavi, observed that "stability in the political system of our revolution has a different meaning than in the West." Perhaps, according to Moussavi's definition of stability, a certain equilibrium has been achieved. Although the ranks of government officials have been thinned by bombings and assassinations, in some ways their power seems firmly entrenched. They now head the major institutions of the state, along with their allies who run a network of mosques and revolutionary organizations across the country. They control the executive and judicial branches. Their appointees run the key departments that make economic policy, such as the Central Bank, the Plan and Budget Organization, and the National Iranian Oil Company. Parliament is not yet wholly subservient, but the overwhelming majority tend to vote with the Islamic Republic Party.

In the ministries and other government agencies, purges have driven out the generally moderate technocrats who had assumed important posts in the immediate postrevolution period. Protégés of the Islamic fundamentalists hold most of these positions today. Throughout the civil service there are economists, bankers, and administrators who would prefer to carry out the government's business with more pragmatism and less ideological fervor, but fear of reprisal encourages silence. The clerics' control also extends deep into the provincial governments where administrations have been overhauled to ensure loyalty to the regime.

The "parallel government" of revolutionary organizations is firmly in place. The revolutionary courts have largely usurped the functions of the regular courts. Some of the clerics who head these courts, such as the Ayatollah Asadollah Lajvardi and Hojjat-ol-Eslam Mohammadi-Gilani, wield great power and have sent hundreds of Iranians to die before the firing squads.

The revolutionary organizations have access to substantial financial resources, are able to dispense with patronage and jobs, and are headed by or linked to influential clerics and officials. The Foundation of the Oppressed has been entrusted with the management of hundreds of confiscated factories, engineering and

Shaul Bakhash is currently a member of the Institute for Advanced Study in Princeton.

construction firms, agricultural enterprises, newspapers, and office buildings. The government this year asked Parliament to allocate one billion dollars to the Crusade for Reconstruction, a revolutionary organization that carries out small rural projects.

The paramilitary Revolutionary Guards are now more centralized and are said to number anywhere from 30,000 to 50,000 men. They are still no match for the regular army, which has gained organizational strength and prestige through the war with Iraq. But whatever the sympathies of the officers and the rank and file, the army did not move to support Bani-Sadr in his struggle to remain in office. The officers suffered hideously in the post-revolution purges, and the instinct is to refrain from factional political struggles to get on with the war with Iraq, and to use this breathing space to regroup. The army may yet be drawn into the power struggle, but probably not in the near future.

YET THE ruling mullahs in Iran face grave difficulties. Their economic problems are mounting. Their power rests on a network of volatile revolutionary organizations, techniques of mass mobilization, and an Islamic-revolutionary ideology, all of which feed the undercurrent of turmoil and militate against orderly government. What remains of the leadership appears increasingly rudderless. Despite Moussavi's statement that the revolution enjoys mass support, there is growing public opposition to the regime.

The economy is not on the verge of collapse as some commentators on Iran contend, although the country's economic position has deteriorated considerably. Inflation is rampant. Industrial production is down and the government is heavily subsidizing the hundreds of factories and industrial enterprises it has nationalized. Agricultural production in key sectors has plummeted. The war with Iraq has taken its toll. It has curtailed Iranian oil exports, knocked out over 60 percent of domestic refining capacity, denied Iran access to its largest port, at Khorramshahr, inflicted damage in war-zone cities, and created, by the government's own account, 1.8 million refugees.

The government has cushioned these damages by continuing to pay its civil servants and the workers in the nationalized industries, even where these are idle or are operating at well below capacity, and by funding the thousands of new employees in the revolutionary organizations. Imports of food and other items are substantial; the price of basic foods, like meat, sugar, and cooking oil, is subsidized. But the ability to carry out such measures is heavily dependent on oil revenues. It is oil money that has kept the shops fairly well stocked, the factories limping along, and the import trade booming. With falling oil production and dwindling exports, Iran has begun to draw on its substantial foreign exchange reserves. A serious depletion of the reserves could be catastrophic for the economy.

Despite the rhetoric about Islam and revolution—or, rather, because of it—the leaders of the Islamic Republic seem increasingly uncertain about their goals. On paper, the revolutionaries (of every stripe) are committed to providing for the oppressed, discouraging extremes in poverty and wealth, and preventing the exploitation of man by man. But these ideals continue to collide with pragmatic realities. Religious (and left-wing) radicals favor seizure of property and a kind of rough distributive justice. But officials who often mouth the same ideas are constrained from acting on them by fears of further economic breakdown. Thus a hastily drafted land reform law was introduced with much fanfare last year and then hastily withdrawn.

The future of the judicial system remains in limbo as jurists grapple with the seemingly intractable problem of creating an Islamic system of justice. The universities were closed in April 1980, ostensibly as a preliminary step toward the "Islamization" of higher education. Now, 17 months later, the universities remain shut down. Although textbooks are being rewritten to emphasize the role of Islam and the clerical class in leading the community, and young teachers are being trained to be qualified spokesmen for the new doctrine, even the most ardent advocates of Iran's cultural revolution seem to have little idea how an Islamic system of higher education should be organized.

Both the radical clerics and the left-wing opposition groups are committed to revolutionary change, and both have blueprints for the transformation of society. This makes the middle ground in Iranian politics slippery. There has been no lack of supporters of moderation, but its audience has been limited. The case of Bani-Sadr illustrates this problem.

WHEN BANI-SADR became President in January 1980, Khomeini placed at his disposal the formal instruments of his authority. Yet Bani-Sadr was unable to turn these concessions to his advantage. He was out-voted and out-maneuvered in the Revolutionary Council and the High Defense Council, both of which Khomeini had placed under his direction. The men Khomeini permitted him to appoint to head the state radio and television networks and the Revolutionary Guards were rendered ineffective by their own employees, who refused to work with them. The appointees resigned their posts within weeks of assuming them. They were replaced by Islamic Republic Party loyalists. The I.R.P. emerged from the parliamentary elections with a solid majority in the legislature and then used its votes to gain control of the Cabinet, to whittle down the powers of the President, and to wrest from his grasp such key institutions as the Central Bank.

Bani-Sadr's setbacks were due partly to personal shortcomings. His administrative style often seemed an exercise in organized chaos. He displayed little patience for building up organizational support. He

tended to alienate, rather than cultivate, potential allies among the politically powerful bazaar merchants, the conservative clerics, and the moderate intellectuals. But his failure was also due to the influence his rivals achieved through the revolutionary organizations, to their ability to mobilize and deploy street crowds, and to their readiness to employ strong-arm methods and smear tactics. Khomeini often supported Bani-Sadr, but in the end he was swayed by what he perceived to be the public temper, and backed the radical clerics and their revolutionary organizations.

ATTEMPTS were made by prominent Iranians to organize political support for Bani-Sadr. The excesses of the revolutionary bodies were widely criticized. Khomeini's son, Ahmad, and Khomeini's grandson, Hossein, consistently stood up for Bani-Sadr and spoke against the President's rivals. Even Khomeini's son-in-law, the late Ayatollah Eshraqi, urged support for the President earlier this year, turning against him only when the anti-Bani-Sadr tide in the early summer threatened to engulf Eshraqi as well. Mehdi Bazargan, the moderate first Prime Minister of the Islamic Republic, was among 40 parliamentary deputies who in February signed a letter protesting the government's inaction against the I.R.P. club-wielders.

That same month 133 writers and intellectuals circulated an open letter to protest illegal trials, suppression of basic freedoms, muzzling of the press, burning of books, and other violations of the Constitution. The writer Ali-Asghar Hajj Seyyed Javadi, one of the most courageous critics of unconstitutional violations under the Shah, issued a separate declaration, decrying the "Islam of the stick and club" and the corruption and absolutist tendencies of the ruling party. "The monster of fascism," he said, "has been let out of the bottle."

Additional support for Bani-Sadr came from the clerical community and middle-class groups. In January, two parliamentary deputies, Hassan Lahuti, a moderate cleric, and Ahmad Salamatian, a member of a prominent Isfahan merchant family, addressed a pro-Bani-Sadr political rally in the shrine city of Mashhad. Demonstrations in favor of Salamatian were subsequently organized in the Isfahan bazaar. But the Mashhad meeting was disrupted. The pro-Salamatian/Bani-Sadr demonstrations in Isfahan were snuffed out. When Lahuti subsequently attempted to address a meeting of his own constituency in Gilan province, armed ruffians prevented him from speaking and attacked his car, causing him to suffer a heart attack. Khomeini's grandson, Hossein, who spoke at the same meeting, was roughed up.

Mashhad, one of the country's two leading centers of Islamic learning, has meantime emerged as a rival to Khomeini's "home base" in Qum for religious (and political) influence and primacy. Last March Ayatollah Tabatabai-Qumi, one of Mashhad's influential religious leaders, questioned the Islamic justification of

clauses in the new Constitution that vested supreme powers in Khomeini's hands. He described the majority of the revolutionary courts as "corrupt and cruel" and said that the "trials, tortures, judicial decisions, and confiscations of property perpetrated by the present leaders are all contrary to Islamic principles and rules."

Such disaffection among important sectors of the community, which never really developed into a coherent force until Bani-Sadr's ouster, suggests there are grounds for a coalescing of various opposition groups. The events of the last three months constitute a seismic shift in the turbulent politics of the Islamic Republic. The break between Khomeini and a range of left-wing political groups is now final. Khomeini is being denounced on the streets of Tehran. The opposition is perceived to have gained credible leaders in Bani-Sadr and Rajavi. The two men have announced the establishment of a National Resistance Council, with Bani-Sadr as president and Rajavi as prime minister. They are calling for an overthrow of the regime.

Both men bring resources to such an alliance. Bani-Sadr enjoys some support among the middle classes. He gained credit in the months before his ouster for his role in rehabilitating the army and his forthright denunciation of official corruption and autocracy and violations of civil rights. The Mujahedeen have a large following among the younger generation. Both their revolutionary and their Islamic credentials are firm. Unlike the Western-educated technocrats associated with Bani-Sadr, they can draw support from lower-middle-class and working-class elements, from which they themselves emerge.

But the alliance is beset with problems. Bani-Sadr, in the eyes of would-be supporters, was associated with the excesses of the present regime during his presidency. The man who now denounces Khomeini for repression "worse than under the Shah" was not long ago lauding Khomeini as one of the world's greatest leaders. The Mujahedeen are hostile to Western forms of capitalism, and their radicalism causes unease among the bazaar merchants and the professional middle class.

THE IDEOLOGICAL orientation of the Mujahedeen and Bani-Sadr stands in the way of an alliance with conservative and potentially influential clerical leaders who also desire to end Khomeini's rule. Bani-Sadr and Rajavi have ruled out cooperation with the moderates who preceded them into exile in Paris.

The violent tactics the Mujahedeen are now employing are a throwback to the methods they used against the Shah's government. They are intended to foment disorder, lay bare the vulnerability of the government, decimate its leadership, and shock the mass of the people into open opposition. The romantics among the Mujahedeen believe these tactics will lead to a massive armed uprising. The more pragmatic view the tactics

of urban violence as providing the spark for the kind of massive strikes and acts of civil disobedience that brought down the Shah's government. Indeed, short of civil war, the Mujahedeen and their allies cannot hope by acts of violence alone to dislodge their rivals from their civil and religious strongholds. They must look to the same massive shifts in loyalties, particularly in the civil service and the bazaar, that paralyzed the Shah's regime and installed Khomeini in power.

Is such a transfer of loyalties imminent? The clerics in power seem to be intent upon bringing it about. The executions of the past four months are unprecedented in recent Iranian history, certainly in this century. In the early postrevolution period, executions were directed primarily against high-ranking bureaucrats and military officers of the Shah's government, but the present round of killings are cutting down young men and women from middle- and lower-middle-class families. Khomeini recently called on parents to denounce their own children to the authorities. At the beginning of the academic year in September, he told 12- and 14-year-olds to purge their counterrevolutionary schoolmates from the classrooms. The purges in the civil service continue, deepening alienation within the

bureaucracy, and although working-class families continue to look to their religious leaders for direction, they perceive the signs of official incompetence and widespread corruption.

In the belief that any change will be an improvement over existing conditions, members of the bazaar, the bureaucracy, and the middle classes may yet set aside their misgivings about the politics of the Mujahedeen and their allies. Former Prime Minister Mehdi Bazargan spoke out in Parliament several weeks ago, declaring that "acts of revenge by this government will turn the country into an ocean of blood." But Bazargan was shouted down and, as is the normal pattern, crowds in the street were mobilized immediately to call for his expulsion from Parliament, and even for his death. Voices like Bazargan's now sound only faintly. Loyalties are increasingly divided, and a substantial part of the population is armed. Bazargan's hope for reconciliation among opposition elements, and even between the moderates and those in government, is a frail one indeed. The government as it is now organized cannot put an end to the violence engendered by dissident groups. The bloodletting in Iran will thus continue as long as the cycle of punishment and revenge recurs.

John Paul II's new encyclical is no bull.

PAPAL ECONOMICS

BY NICHOLAS VON HOFFMAN

RONALD REAGAN isn't the only ex-actor to take up another vocation and go on to become a world figure. That is also John Paul II's personal history; but the similarity between Pope and President ends right there. Indeed, the gap between the two is as large as that between Reagan and Brezhnev, and it goes beyond the American government's supplying guns for the El Salvador National Guard to fire at John Paul's priests, nuns, and bishops. Reagan and John Paul are divided by utterly different views of man and society. The Vicar of Christ does not care to walk on the supply side.

In an hour when the American liberal left scuttles to the rear in backward falling confusion, the Pope in Rome gives us a picture of the New Jerusalem wholly unlike the nasty mélange of dogma and theoretics, of fundamentalism and laissez-faire, that we are coming to recognize as orthodox Reaganism. The message of the Pope's recently published encyclical, *Laborem Exercens* ("On Human Work"), is that human life and labor have

higher uses than as fodder for a brutish struggle for the largest return on invested capital.

The long and closely reasoned documents known as encyclicals are not the voice of the Pope speaking ex cathedra or infallibly. But they do represent the teachings of the Roman Catholic Church and are therefore to be taken very seriously. Their value and their influence varies with the stature and ability of the popes who write them. Some are blessedly soon forgotten; others have a power that long outlives their authors. *Laborem Exercens* (encyclicals get their titles from the first two words of the Latin text) was issued to mark the 90th anniversary of Leo XIII's *Rerum Novarum*, the Catholic Church's first extensive statement on human work in the modern industrial world. *Rerum Novarum* and Pius XI's *Quadragesimo Anno*, issued on the 40th anniversary of Leo's encyclical, have had important repercussions in every nation with a sizable Catholic population, and nowhere more so than in the United States.

These two "social encyclicals" opened the way for the clergy here to permit and often to encourage the Catholic immigrant masses to join labor unions. They were the signal to religious orders like the Jesuits to open labor schools in scores of cities to teach Catholic trade unionists organizing techniques, parliamentary procedure, and labor law. One of the reasons that American unions stayed resolutely non-Communist was because of the generation of labor leaders trained by Catholic clergymen. If, over time, it appeared to many that the Catholics were interested only in defeating the left, that is hardly what Leo XIII had in mind when he wrote these angry words:

... it gradually came about that the present age handed over the workers, each alone and defenseless, to the inhumanity of employers and the unbridled greed of competitors ... [T]he whole process of production as well as trade in every kind of goods has been brought almost entirely under the power of a few, so that a very few and exceedingly rich men have laid a yoke almost of slavery on the unnumbered masses of non-owning workers.

The man who wrote this had more on his mind than killing Communists, particularly since he wrote it 27 years before the Bolshies came to power. His social vision as passed down to this Pope by Pius XI is elaborated and explained in *Laborem Exercens*. John Paul II has not struck out on his own, but has built on received tradition, making his contemporary contribution to the construction of the City of God in the post-industrial epoch.

While liberals in Congress stand silent and accept the premises of Reaganism in hopes of deflecting Stockman's ax as it comes chopping down on education or hot lunches for children, the Pope rejects the

first principles of the Administration's creed. Catholic social teaching rejects the primacy of *homo economicus*. It condemns the proposition that the sum total of self-interested acts, the aggregates of calculated greed in the corporate board room and the free market, are the building blocks of social justice. The popes have never been persuaded that Adam Smith's invisible hand deals from a fair deck. But whether or not the game is rigged is beside the point. According to papal philosophy, making the free market the central mechanism of

society is an abdication of responsibility in favor of an unchecked and dangerous economic individualism.

"Just as the unity of human society cannot be founded on an opposition of classes, so also the right ordering of economic life cannot be left to a free competition of forces," wrote Leo XIII in 1890, because competition, "while justified and certainly useful provided it is kept within certain limits, clearly cannot direct economic life—a truth which the outcome of the application in practice of the tenets of this evil individualistic spirit has more than sufficiently demonstrated."

Every time David Stockman or Ronald Reagan or

James Watt appears before a congressional committee, this very "evil individualistic spirit" is exalted, and the assertion is repeated that the market, a mechanical principle of competition, can be substituted for what Pope Leo called "the intervention of a created intellect." No gimmick, not even one crafted by such a skilled artificer as a Milton Friedman, is to be substituted for the conscious and conscientious building of the good community, or so the Vatican holds.

John Paul II, like previous popes, condemns not only Marxist materialism but also what he calls "materialis-



DRAWING OF POPE JOHN PAUL II BY VINT LAWRENCE FOR THE NEW REPUBLIC

tic economism," which is precisely what Reagan *et alia* preach. Unlike the Communists, the materialistic economists don't padlock the churches and synagogues, but they do, like the Red brethren, organize the society wholly for economic purposes—for efficiency, productivity, and the lowest unit cost according to the value of the bottom line of profit maximization. To the Pope this is "the error of economism." (In Catholic jargon, "error," as in the error of dialectical materialism, is something more serious than just a mistake.) He goes on to say:

This fundamental error of thought can and must be called an error of materialism, in that economism directly or indirectly includes a conviction of the primacy and superiority of the material, and directly and indirectly places the spiritual and the personal in a position of subordination to material reality [i.e., strip mining coal and selling concessions to hoteliers in the national parks]. This is not theoretical materialism in the full sense of the term, but it is certainly practical materialism, a materialism judged capable of satisfying man's needs not so much on the grounds of premises derived from materialist theory as on the grounds of a particular way of evaluating things and so on the grounds of a certain hierarchy of goods based on the greater immediate attractiveness of what is material.

For John Paul II economics begins not with money but with people. If he quotes the Apostle Paul to the effect that he who doesn't work, let him not eat, the Pope also insists that work must be ennobling, that it must be one of the ways people fulfill themselves, that its end and purpose is higher, better, and other than profit. From there this Polish man who wears the triple tiara slips into a form of soft, non-Marxist socialism. He reaffirms "the right of private property," but not what he calls "the exclusive right to private ownership of the means of production." He endorses their "socialization" under "suitable conditions."

THE POPE'S soft-core socialism is founded on a dual notion of property. There is intrinsically private property (house, car, farm, tools, grocery store, etc.), which is inalienable; and then there is the means of production. In this second category are factories, laboratories, technology, and natural resources. These he regards as candidates for socialization on the grounds they are the common inheritance of human beings and often the product of the work and invention of generations. He doesn't say property in this second category must be socialized, but it may be. In any event, it cannot morally be used according to the whim and selfishness of asocial private owners, because the Pope also posits two proprietors for every factory. The first is whoever has title to legal ownership; the second is what he calls "the indirect employer," the society or the state, which has the final and overriding responsibility and power to see that the property is used for the common good. Michael Harrington, meet

John Paul II. You two have something in common.

As a man who has spent his adult life in Communist Poland, John Paul is not about to embrace what he calls "excessive bureaucratic centralization." Instead he asks for many kinds of "joint ownership of the means of work." That might include the sort of worker control that Solidarity is wrestling with the Polish government to obtain, or it might be cooperatives or profit or stock-sharing plans or a municipally owned electric company. In any event, he is talking about a society in which your private property—your house and your car, say—are retained as is, but not the control and ownership over huge, multibillion-dollar enterprises that shape and bend the lives of millions here and abroad.

NOT ONLY has he thereby taken the Catholic Church far to the left of where many Americans have presumed it to be, he is also preaching a social gospel that differentiates between the Christian way and the American way, between social justice and the social models purveyed by Ron Reagan and Al Haig. At the moment when we here are being pushed into accepting the privatization of everything from the care of the aged to the franchising of nursery schools, at the very time when the President in Washington strives to banish all not-for-profit activities as subversive to the free marketplace, the Pope in Rome propounds a new place for public power and, Heaven forfend, even for "rational planning." At a time when the Reagan Administration wants to repeal laws against American corporations bribing foreign officials and rigging prices, John Paul reinforces his flocks' suspicions that it is "the companies referred to as multinational or transnational" which cause "an ever increasing disproportion between national incomes" of our world and the third one.

Long passages of *Laborem Exercens* read as though they had been written by Teddy Kennedy's office staff. The Pope runs down the liberal checklist and makes a graphite squiggle in every box: safety in the work place, social security, health services, unemployment compensation, the right to unions and other professional associations for bargaining and representation,



COMING

Charles Krauthammer
on I.Q. Fraud.

and the right to a job, but not just any job—rather, one that is “in accordance with the capacities of individuals,” i.e., a job that suits one’s training and vocational preferences. If the Pope be inspired from on high, then it would appear that the late doggedly and dedicatedly liberal Hubert Humphrey siteth at the right hand of the Creator with full permission to beam down the liberal agenda.

From Leo XIII onward the popes have preached that there is a material minimum necessary for healthy family life. On this John Paul II is in accord with his predecessors, although what he has to say sounds almost radical when the Reagan Administration is doing its best to batter down the minimum wage:

Just remuneration for the work of an adult who is responsible for a family means remuneration which will suffice for establishing and properly maintaining a family and for providing security for its future. Such remuneration can be given either through what is called a family wage—that is a single salary given to the head of the family for his work, sufficient for the needs of the family without the other spouse having to take up gainful employment outside the home—or through other social measures such as family allowances or grants to mothers devoting themselves exclusively to their families.

Reaganism blames Dr. Spock and permissiveness for the bruising that family life has undergone. John Paul puts the blame on separating mother from child. Although this Pope has won himself low marks for his positions on women and women’s questions, we have now had enough experience with both parents working, with single-parent families, and with mass day-care enterprises, whether run by the civil service or a large corporation, to doubt the wisdom of rearing small children and infants outside the home. The larger organization hasn’t proved to be an acceptable substitute for mother, father, grandmother, or anybody at all with a continuing emotional connection with the child. And yet the no-parent household is the result of free-market, ready-debt consumerism. We’ve been led to believe we need merchandise on a scale we can only afford if both parents work.

ALTHOUGH honoring woman as wife and mother in a manner that would make the more preposterous elements in American feminism grind their teeth, John Paul is anything but unsympathetic to women who want a working life outside the home:

It will redound to the credit of society to make it possible for a mother—without inhibiting her freedom, without psychological or practical discrimination, and without penalizing her as compared with other women—to devote herself to taking care of her children and educating them in accordance with their needs which vary with age. Having to abandon these tasks in order to take up paid work outside the home is wrong from the point of view of society and of the family when it contradicts or hinders these primary goals of the mission of the mother.

A word about the style and reasoning of this document. The baroque Latin of the past is replaced by a more austere use of language. No more profusions of Angelic Doctors and “illustrious predecessors of happy memory,” although the writer, like previous popes, remains very much an Aristotelian; it is St. Thomas Aquinas, Aristotle’s medieval disciple, who is used by John Paul to demonstrate the limits of the privateness of property. What is unusual is the reliance on direct biblical citations, particularly from the Book of Genesis, as the sub-basement to hold up the structure of his ideas. It would be a mistake to suggest the encyclical has a Protestant cast to it, for it sits too obviously in Roman Catholic tradition, but in style, reasoning, and uses of sources as much as the stuff of what he’s saying, the Pope has cut new ground and prepared a document that many people are going to find themselves repeatedly coming back to.

THE POPE’S vision has nothing in common with Reagan’s *pousse-café* society, with its truly needy living off slops at the bottom layer, its vast middle competing by slashing each other’s throats to get by, and, for the few on top, the gracious life, all taffeta and dinner jackets, led by Fancy Nancy, her couturiers, and her friends. For John Paul II, society is a cathedral, a man-made, man-designed, upward-looking structure in which every part and stone serves every other. The older Christian churches—the Catholics, the Orthodox, the Anglican—have never been able to give up the principles of community and cooperation for those of competition and individualism.

For the Catholic Church in its best days and its worst, human life has always partaken of human union. The church fosters a social bond that repudiates the uncaring personal isolationism celebrated in a contemporary Washington, which seems to believe that all prophets are found on the bottom lines of ledgers, or invariably come with degrees in business administration, dressed in Bill Blass suits.

But when popes speak, do the faithful listen? Not always, and not with alacrity. Yet the Roman Catholic Church has changed mightily since Leo XIII’s time when it was still a frightened and rigidly Counter-Reformation institution summed up by the now obsolete phrase “throne and altar.” Catholic Christianity is a revivifying force in many places where the priest was once looked upon as an oppressor. Look at what is happening in Brazil, the Philippines, Poland, and El Salvador. And in the United States, Catholics—laymen, priests, nuns, and bishops—are playing a conspicuous leadership role in the growing anti-bomb movement. But one need not be Catholic or Christian or even agree with John Paul’s political economy to benefit from his encyclical. *Laborem Exercens* reminds us that Jerry Falwell’s laissez-faire fundamentalism is merely a Christian viewpoint, not the last Christian word.

BOOKS AND THE ARTS

STANLEY KAUFFMANN ON FILMS

Innocents Abroad

Ruth Prawer Jhabvala is a writer of clear distinction who loses it when she writes screenplays. Her script for *Rose-land* (1977) was a ragout of Movieland sentimentalities: her adaptation of *The*

Quartet
(Lyric International)

Gallipoli
(Paramount)

Europeans (1979) reduced James's work from a novel to a series of wooden scaffoldings. Now her screenplay of Jean Rhys's *Quartet* comes as close to obliterating the book as is possible for an adaptation that sticks pretty much to the story and retains much of the dialogue.

All Jhabvala's screen work, as far as I know, has been done for one director-producer team, James Ivory and Ismail Merchant, which may explain the trouble. Of the team's work that I've seen, only *Shakespeare Wallah* (1965) gave me much pleasure; in most of the others, the filmmaking itself has been stilted. But in *Quartet* Ivory-Merchant don't provide Jhabvala with that "excuse": it's a top-drawer cast, Ivory's direction is more secure than I can remember it, and the atmosphere—Paris of the expatriates in 1920—is vivid. The screenplay unbalances Rhys. The novelist gives us the sense of a tiny, but astonishingly hardy, narcissistic bird singing the song of its troubles during a prolonged battering by life. The effect of the film is just a lot of wailing.

Most of this wailing is done by Isabelle Adjani as the presumably autobiographical heroine. She is married to a handsome Pole who turns a swindling trick ineptly. After he is jailed, she is alone and broke. She is taken into the home of a rich English couple played by Alan Bates and Maggie Smith: he is an art patron, she a painter. (The Bates role is generally believed to be a portrait of Ford Madox Ford, with *Quartet* as an account of Rhys's affair with him.) The

bizarre coziness in the story is that Smith not only agrees to Adjani's presence in their home, she virtually assists her husband's affair with the guest. Apparently it's not the first time that Smith has helped her husband to acquire women; and Smith conveys that, though she is not delighted—and is not bereft of his conjugal attentions—she does it to ensure the marriage.

Out of the ménage and its consequences, very little of interest develops other than the atmospherics, already familiar to us from painting and photography and literature. (A character vaguely modeled on Hemingway hovers vaguely on the edges of the story.) Where Rhys gives us loneliness and bewilderment and desperate strength in her heroine, the film just gives us Adjani crying a lot. Bates, moustached, generally spectacted, always brusque, supplies the solipsism that equates moral values with gratification. Smith slithers through her dialogue the way she slithers in her slinky 1920s dresses, and she has the most memorable line. She and Bates and Adjani, whose character is named Marya, are sitting at a restaurant table one night, bored; and Smith suggests that they visit an amusement park. "We'll put Marya on the Joy Wheel," she says, "and watch her being banged about a bit."

Quartet lacks the interest of its source because of its basic failure, a familiar one: failure to understand that filming a good novel doesn't mean filming the story, it means transmutation of the entire work.

Gallipoli is a Young Person's Guide to Grimness. This Australian film, which deals with the bloodily disastrous Allied expedition on the Turkish peninsula in 1915-16—at least, that's where it ends—is so thin that at times I felt that I was looking through the stretched film at the naked screen. The script was written by David Williamson, whose football play *The Club* was produced in New

York a few years ago and was similarly thin. *Gallipoli* was directed by Peter Weir, whose previous pictures, *The Last Wave* and *Picnic at Hanging Rock*, were like the worst of Eastern Europe—artiness ladled over trite or clumsily symbolic material, the whole suffused with a fear of being out of the mainstream and a frenzy to prove that the makers are not provincials. This time Weir has veered to the opposite extreme: striving for massive simplicity, he attains complicated insipidity. Much has been made of the spectacle in *Gallipoli*, the desert shots, the landings of troops, the trench episodes. All that these sequences signified to me was that Weir had a bigger budget than before.

Two young Australians, both runners, compete in a race in 1915, join the army because they have heard about their countrymen at Gallipoli, are assigned to different regiments but are reunited while training in Egypt, and are sent to Gallipoli together. We are not given much chance to miss the Bitterness of It All. The result of their shining youthful enthusiasm is that they are callously fed into a meat grinder. The officer's pistol shot that sends Youth One over the top to certain death reminds us of the starter's pistol in the races back home. As the boy charges through the machine-gun hail, he repeats his coach's instructions about running. (But he carries no weapon. What did he expect if he reached the Turkish trenches, a medal?) And Youth Two, who is running through the bombarded trenches with an order from the high command that would have saved his

FILMS WORTH SEEING

Chariots of Fire. Exhilarating, lovely, finally grave. The true story of two British Olympic runners, 1924, used for complex social comedy-drama.

The French Lieutenant's Woman. It ends more in mystification than mystery, but this double story—of 1867 England and the actors making the 1867 story—has rich texture and is finely acted.

Stevie. Glenda Jackson as the poet Stevie Smith, Mona Washbourne as her aunt, in a small film of large spiritual size.

SK

friend's life, is too late—he hears the “starter's” pistol before he can get back to his own trench.

Add to all this the *Journey's End* touches—the officer who, the night before the attack, celebrates his wedding anniversary by drinking champagne and listening to Bizet on the gramophone while his soldiers stand respectfully in the doorway, this same officer who next day utters that imperishable line, “I can't ask my men to do what I won't do,” and leads them over the top—and you have a film perfectly geared to early high school ironies. *Gallipoli* has a few hints in it of resentment of the British high command's possible use of Australian troops as decoys to draw fire away from British troops. This theme might have given the picture some bite, but it's not developed.

The running in *Gallipoli* reminds me of *Chariots of Fire*, about which I've had letters from several readers. In my review I said that the Blake poem from which the title comes is never quoted in the film, nor is it. But these readers point out that the poem was set to music by Hubert Parry, that the song is almost a second national anthem in Britain, and that there is a quotation from the music in the film. British audiences would therefore get, through that music, a reference to the title that is lost on us—was lost on me, anyway, though in fact I've heard that hymn in *The Loneliness of the Long Distance Runner* and *Women in Love*. Thanks to the correspondents.

A FEW WEEKS ago I was privileged to introduce Akira Kurosawa at a press luncheon in New York. This gave me a chance to ask him a few questions. His answers:

His next project—he is 71—is a version of *King Lear* that he will apply to Japanese history much in the same way as *Macbeth* was used for *Throne of Blood*.

During the two years that he was scouting locations for *Kagemusha*, he was also noting possible locations for the *Lear* project.

Takashi Shimura, the excellent actor known all over the world through *Ikiru*, *The Seven Samurai*, and other Kurosawa films, will not be in the *Lear*. Kurosawa has a large role for which he wants Shimura, but the actor has been hospitalized for a year and is not recovering. (I felt as if I were hearing this about a friend.)

The production of the *Lear* film has

not started. The date is uncertain. The money has not yet been raised. (Would any other artist of comparable stature outside film have to worry at age 71 about the means to do his work?)

Before the questions, I sat near him at lunch and was fascinated by his hands. They are extraordinarily large. He's a tall man, but not physically overwhelming. His hands have long broad palms with thick strong fingers; they seem almost out of character, a manual laborer's hands.

The occasion was the launching of a Kurosawa retrospective. Japan House is showing all 26 of his films, including three never before seen in the U.S. All of them will be shown at least twice in a series that began on October 9 and will run through December 20. If you are in the New York area during that time, treat yourself. The address is 333 East 47 Street, New York, New York 10017; (212) 832-1155 for information. (No reservations except for Japan Society members. First come, first served.)

A long poem about Pasadena, worry, death, taxes, planning, and the Industrial Revolution.

AN AMERICAN EPIC

BY ROBERT HASS

It appears that, whether one likes the idea or not, it is going to be important to understand the culture of southern California, since it has had a hand in forming two Presidents and provides what is apparently a congenial atmosphere for the retirement of a third. “Culture” may not be the word one would first choose to indicate the ambience of locker rooms at country club golf courses near Palm Beach and San Clemente; and you wonder if even Bertold Brecht or Gabriel García Márquez—masters of the fact that the middle class hates to be reminded that its comfortable life is political—could make it interesting. Golf is a worrier's game, inward, concentrated, a matter of inches, invented by the same people who gave us Presbyterianism. The story of how water arrived in a desert place to grow the grass on which the game is played is the history of California politics. Afterward, men drink Jack Daniels and play dominoes, or, newly arrived, couples sit around their pools, looking up the word for “Venetian blind” in a book called *Home Maid Spanish*. The helicopters overhead are the means the city of Pasadena has found to search for purse snatchers, who make their grabs on the main

streets and then disappear into arroyos of almost impenetrable chaparral in the canyons. Odds are that the purse snatcher is descended from West Africans. The maid is most likely a mixture of Spanish and aboriginal, belonging to the race of peoples who made the Aleutian crossing 500,000 years ago and believed now to have originated in what we call Vietnam. It may not be a culture, but it is a complicated place, complicated and thin at the same time.

James McMichael's *Four Good Things* (Houghton Mifflin; \$4.95) should ease the task of understanding. It is a new, remarkable long poem about—of all things—Pasadena. It is also about worry, death, taxes, planning, probability theory, insomnia, stamp collecting, cancer, domestic architecture, sex manuals, the Industrial Revolution, real estate, and—it is so un-Russian a book that one can actually say this—the American soul. It begins, tranquilly enough, with recollections of childhood. The narrator's father is a real estate developer; his mother, in an upstairs bedroom of their pleasant suburban house, is dying of cancer. So the poem announces its themes immediately: the idea of place and the dread and bewilderment of death. From there it moves out into its meditation on a quite amazing variety of related American subjects in which it has discovered this common pair of threads. Place, in the child's mind

where the poem begins, is a masculine proposition, and a rather dubious one, the promise of the good life sketched out in survey maps, prospective buyers, and the cheerful desolation of lots. And the female propositions—death, repose—seem to flower from the middle of that promise. Place, which is everywhere present and palpable, is not quite real; and death, which is not present and everywhere palpable, is very real—and they are somehow married, though they seem not to talk to each other very much.

If this seems to be an accurate and scary definition of southern California, or at least one steadily suggested by the other writers of that place, Joan Didion and Raymond Chandler and Ross McDonald, then it will also begin to suggest why I think James McMichael may have written a classic American book. It has the speculative range, the freedom of imagination, and fierce, clear eye that make the work being produced by the post-Vietnam generation of American writers—Maxine Hong Kingston or Thomas Pynchon, for example—so interesting, but it also has the virtues of good, expository prose, of the essays of John McPhee or Edward Hoagland. The verse is quiet, lapidary; all the excitement is in watching McMichael take up one unpoetic subject after another and illuminate it by turning it back on the emotions of a child who is watching the city take shape around him and the people moving into their houses and who tries to find in this activity a clue to what it is his father does all day and why his mother is dying.

IT IS NOT easy to demonstrate how he achieves this. It is a long, engrossing work and its effects are slow to develop, like a film full of languid dissolves. But the central technique is simply that he makes connections. What, for example, is the connection between Pasadena and the Industrial Revolution? One is that the characteristic style of California domestic architecture derives from the arts and crafts movement in Victorian England, which was a reaction against the machine production of domestic objects. The rich of Pasadena, whom a world market brought into being, made houses out of William Morris's criticism of the world market and its shabby production standards. Very beautiful houses, and McMichael describes the principle of their construction with a wonderfully quiet

(and faintly nagging) accuracy:

The roof was long and relatively flat. Beams above the frames of doors and windows were much broader than the frames themselves and paralleled the covered entryways and porches. Even the stairs inside were less than vertical, each section of the railing carved from a single piece of teak and joined to all the other teak—the notched and interlocking kickplates, the splines and level boards that were the facing of the well. Their stairs were furniture. A bench along a landing had the same insistent finish as an inglenook, the same square ebony caps for screwheads as the tables and the chairs. Everything showed you how it went together.

This is the work of Greene and Greene, architects who, along with Bernard Maybeck in San Francisco, perfected the informal style of California houses. Architectural historians emphasize the use of natural materials, rough stone and redwood shingle, and the decision to expose rather than disguise workmanship. McMichael notices something else, not just the reassurance that seeing how things go together can give, but the fact that reassurance was needed. He notices the anxiety previous to the desire for place; and this leads him to think of his Irish-American neighbors in those ample and curiously uncomfortable houses and of how their ancestors might have lived in Richard Arkwright's Manchester, when the world that made California possible was coming into being:

People were living in the seam, in undercrofts of bridges and along the rivers and canals where they could bathe, the water warm from the boiler-tailings, dyes, and bleaches, from the refuse that would lift through floors of housewells slipping from the Irkwell to the Irk. Crosses on the Ordnance Maps of 1850 mark the streets where five or more had died of typhus. Workers ate only the tainted meats. Their foodstuffs were adulterated: flour, with chalk and gypsum; pounded

nutshells in the pepper, sloe-leaves in the tea. Mothers were back at work the same day they delivered, milk dripping from their shirts. Each wet nurse had a dozen babies. She'd give them Quietness—a dose of treacle, sugar, and crude opium—and they would look much older than they were.

The cottage industry skills that country people necessarily had in the 18th century and that William Morris and the Greenes hoped to revive were exactly what was not wanted in Manchester, as McMichael—taking Engels as his guide—observes:

Skills made a worker more intractable and less dependent. As long as there were workers enough, 'and not all so insane as to prefer dying to living,' their master had it as he wanted. He had the capital to shield himself against uncertainties within the market. And when they came, the workers were displaced and worked for less and were 'as much without volition as the rivers.'

This seems to me another extraordinarily interesting perception. It is easy enough to see that capital was a shield against uncertainty; what is more interesting and subtle is McMichael's conception of its tendency to displace. The literature of the period is full of contrasts between wealth conceived as the repose of property and wealth conceived as the energy of capital. The repose of place was the old shield against the world; the new one is movement and the ability to act. The English poets have written many poems about the way that the old estates embody place; it is interesting that it took an American one to find the poetry of Manchester, and the system that displaced the very idea of place with the idea of a constant hunger for it:

England had outgrown the continent of Europe. Free Trade was Jesus Christ. They formed their joint stock companies and combines, and could count on triple rows of sheds, eight miles of granite docks, calm and deep water in all tides at Liverpool. They were still in that plain geography of 'things in their places,' of bales on hoisting pulleys, and in shipholds and,

along the quays,
the dry white scudding that they lost as
waste.

They were looking for those samenesses
that make us feel we've
broken through to something, through
those
unsure things that happen in a place in
time to
something like our safe, impalpable and
self-sustaining
plans that are always future.

Volition is, of course, what is wanted
if one is going to combat uncertainties.
Vigor and active will were the hallmarks
of the Manchester entrepreneur and
they are the ideas that every American
presidential candidate tries to project
about himself. And planning, McMichael
reminds us, is the main human embodi-
ment of will. Its purpose is to allay anxi-
ety by showing us how we are going
to get there. In fact, the poem insists,
planning and anxiety are almost Sia-
mese twins. It's when we are anxious
that we start to plan; or, having experi-
enced anxiety, we learn to plan before
we begin to feel anxious, as a way of
warding it off. Americans, in this ac-
count, with their city planning, eco-
nomic planning, estate planning, family
planning, with their game plans and

savings plans and lay-away plans, would
seem to be the most anxious people on
earth.

And this fact is also made to connect
to Pasadena where the planner's para-
digm, probability theory, took root in
the Jet Propulsion Laboratory of Aero-
jet International and at the California
Institute of Technology and the Palom-
ar Observatory, our own Stonehenge,
where a large telescopic eye continually
searches the heavens, trying to under-
stand our place in the universe and to
anticipate any unpleasant surprises:

The future was
successive and successful answers to
those
questions it made sense to ask. How far
from the
earth itself could we project? And what
was light?
In the calculus of variations, what was
the mean
process of behavior in a species, in a
social class? Could we computerize a
place for
each of us within the equalizing
sameness of the plan? If we overlooked
nothing,
no single difference of temperament or
will,
if it were all accounted for and stored and
if we

watched it periodically and found it yielded
more and newer orders, it would teach us
how to
master what was probable and make it
pure,
assign it a completeness like the past's.

It is in passages like these that Mc-
Michael comes close, it seems to me, to
revealing something like the American
soul, or one kind of American soul that
has never been accommodated before
to the language of poetry. It is not, per-
haps, what we would like to see—it is
certainly not the American soul of
Whitman's *Leaves of Grass* or Hart Crane's
The Bridge—but it is undeniably familiar,
belongs undeniably to the materials of
American life. McMichael, whether we
like it or not, has taken the language of
our technical resourcefulness, of our
most prestigious professions and most
admired accomplishments, and held it
up for our inspection in a most surpris-
ing place—in the language of poetry. If
it looks disturbed and impoverished,
then we have learned something that it
is important to think about.

Four Good Things drives this home,
takes it all the way inside, in a long
tour-de-force passage describing insomnia
and the way that worry keeps us awake.

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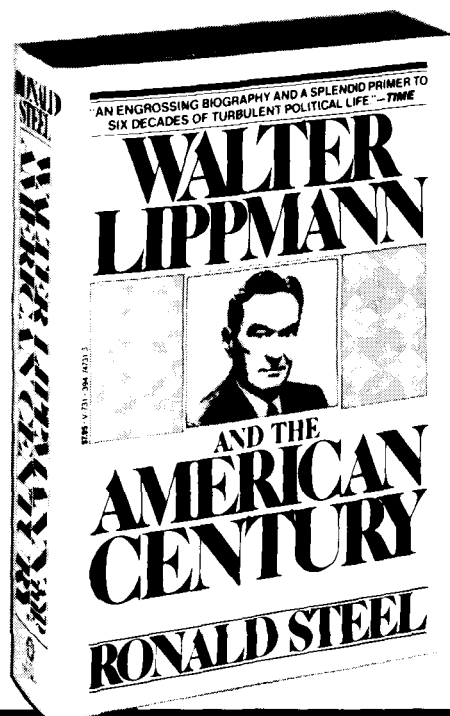
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The whole of it which is brilliant and maddening—like certain stretches of Samuel Beckett or the *roman nouveau*—concludes with a funny (and somewhat creepy) revision of René Descartes, inventor for the West of algebra and of the idea that the only real place is what passes through our minds:

I work at breathing for awhile, listen to Linda's and adopt it, a sleeper's breathing. Mine would be slower. To breathe the way she breathes, I'd have to be awake, and am, and have been awake too long now and have given up on trying to know exactly what I should be doing, how I could be thinking about it all and changing. So I don't care if I go back to sleep. Since it never works to care about it, since my calmness when I care is feigned and crazy, I don't care. I'll get up. I'm too tired to get up . . . The certainty sleep isn't there is me . . .

FEELING ANXIOUS and hungering to be in a place—sleep—where you can't be (because *you* is, by definition, conscious, not asleep) is a metaphor for American restlessness, for all our desires for place and roots. One sees it, as well, in McMichael's portrait of the Midwesterners who came to California (as if it were sleep or unconsciousness) for their piece of the American dream. It is a central irony of the poem—and another of its surprising perceptions—that in order to achieve the American—or any other kind of—dream, you have to be unconscious, which these displaced Iowans aren't exactly:

Living here was too much what they thought it would be. The sequences of perfect days were unavoidably what they'd come for. They should be making more of what was there and possible at any hour in that clear air. With all those possibilities aligned for them along the tracks and poles and wires they should be somewhere else since where they were was old already with their being there.

Only a few brief passages in all the 2,000 or so lines of this work seem to regard the world outside this uneasiness. One of them is written from the point of view of the dying mother, because she is the one figure in the poem who has had to accept what plan-

ning can only forestall, and so she is the one for whom death and pain have made the world more, not less, a place. It is a deeply affecting moment, and I can only quote a part of it:

It would be pain alone that held its place, that couldn't be planned away from that one body that was living it in hope, not waiting, not afraid to know it wasn't worth it, after all that pain. It was worth it. There were people who made it worth it, and the world. A cat came sleepily from a thick shrub and stopped and shook its head. There was time between the bleatings of the horn to be reminded and forget again the huckster and his fish two streets away, then one, then out of hearing, gone, the shadows of the fences less alert as the heat gave way a little and the peas were shucked, all changes watched for now as if one were confined and sitting up in bed, alone, with nothing but the afternoon outside along the ground toward the lilac and the cactus in the foothills . . .

Against the possibility of looking out the window and seeing nothing but the afternoon, place the son's sense of what he learned, growing up in Pasadena:

With my conception, I was virtually coincident with cancer in my mother's body. To exist is to be placed outside, where there are things to fear. My body. Me. The visible pulse at my right ankle, thick blue vein, the skin, sunlight on my ankle in a cold house, now. When I'm afraid, I try to think of everything. I try to change the possible by thinking some one part of it and giving it a place—gratuitous murder, accident, a flood, the separate and bizarre pathologies that could be mine and final. Worry is somewhat less possessive, less complete, More frequent and deliberate, self-amused. It too displaces where I am with something that I make inside me. Each thing I worry is secure, familiar, almost home. Its difference is mine and not the world's. The house wren, when it sings, says 'Here I am.' It looks around and says it.

My worrying and fear are notices that I don't have a place outside and don't know how to find or make one. They are as free of people as a garden is, or as a plan.

Knowledge of our displacement, knowledge of death, these are consciousness for McMichael, and what consciousness does is worry and plan, though it hungers like the wren to say, "Here I am," to make a place out of sleep or to make "Pasadena" or a house like a nest, to make love. Or to make poetry, which is the pure case of the human attempt to find in consciousness freedom from consciousness. That McMichael does not use the occasion of his long poem to celebrate poetry is the one un-American thing about it. It is also the most remarkable thing about it: this is a long American poem that stays in the world of ordinary consciousness, of history and fact and daily life. It does not wander into myth, nor does it surge into the dark of nature, into animals or plants or sexuality. The passage about lovemaking is about consciousness of lovemaking, about sex manuals and sexual technique, which is another symptom of anxiety and planning ahead. Our books on the subject are not about how to be with another person, they are about what to do, and so they too are "as free of people as a garden is, or as a plan."

IN THE FIRST long American poem, Walt Whitman, with a great sense of how comic the idea was, made love to all of us, to the whole future. It is the central sense of possibility in his poem that we are beings who can, through imagination, make the future present. McMichael has exactly reversed this formulation and described a world that makes the present always future. And he also finds it comic—at least the writing about insomnia and the developers of Pasadena and Van Karman's wind tunnel at Cal Tech are funny—but very sad. Partly he seems to think that this is the human condition. We *are* displaced; we *do* have to plan. And partly he seems to want to understand it on economic and social grounds, to see capitalism—private or state—as an engine for continually displacing the present. Capital is itself a thrust toward the future, based on plans; and production is oriented to the future as well. The present, in economic thinking, exists as con-

sumption only, as what is being used and passing out of our hands. It is what is being eaten up. And the clear sense of this in the poem is that it is both a disease and a great sadness.

There is another source for this vision, I think. McMichael belongs to the generation of writers, now about 40, who grew up in the social and economic expansion of the postwar years. It was probably most intense in California. And, as the others did, he watched the planning and the confidence and the technical inventiveness turn, with what seemed to the young unbelievable callousness and efficiency and fury, on Vietnam. That war was, perhaps, a paradigm of planning without people in the plan. The Vietnamese did not fit it and the American young who were supposed to fight the war did not fit it; and as the Administration with a plan to win the war was replaced by an Administration with a plan to end the war, the suffering seemed to go on forever. And a generation of American writers has come to look at the central mechanisms of American life with a deep, stunned, curious detachment, which, I think, the writing in this poem reflects beautifully.

At the present moment, when we have yet another California President

with yet another set of plans—which would seem to include the intensification of a civil war in Central America, the suffering of the elderly and the marginally employed to provide a shield against uncertainties within the market, the shutting down of theaters and symphony orchestras, and the selling of adulterated foodstuffs to the underdeveloped world—the detachment of *Four Good Things*, its precision and meditative quiet, seemed to me especially powerful—with the power art has of stinging us awake. In the last lines of the poem, as the narrator is falling asleep, his wife describes to him an afternoon spent skiing:

The street was ice and hardly wide enough for
two of them at a time, or for a cart.
They felt showy in their bright nylon.
A woman with a bowl looked at them
from her door.
Chickens. A covered water-trough. She
told me
more about the street and then remembered.
What she was saying, she said, was that
there were
farmers out working in the snow.

After all the turnings, it seems radiant, this glimpse of the fact that there are people in the world.

generated among performing musicians a mistrust of new music that was unknown in the 18th and early 19th centuries.

In the absence of new music, what can be expected from this year's renditions of familiar works by Mozart, Beethoven, Haydn (it is the 250th anniversary of his birth, and both Los Angeles and Boston plan celebrations), Mahler, Brahms, Tchaikovsky, Debussy, and the like this season? We are apt to hear little that is striking. Conductors and soloists, whether Itzhak Perlman, Pinchas Zuckermann, Jean Pierre Rampal, Misha Dichter, Lynn Harrell, or Mstislav Rostropovich, will all offer technically superb executions but they are not likely to offer fresh interpretations. The range of risk-taking in interpretation has narrowed because of a concern for authenticity. Gone are the habits of personal interpretation, even rewritings—of the Beethoven 9th Symphony, for example, by Mahler; or the Schumann symphonies by many eminent conductors; Handel by Beecham; and many a well-known work by Stokowski. In the case of Baroque music, the major orchestras and conductors are increasingly cautious as the use of original instruments and historically valid techniques of authentic instrumental performance gain prominence.

Lost in this search for historical authenticity is the legitimate variety of rereadings that are not only possible but also demanded, without a violation of history, by all works of music. The origins of standard but interchangeable readings of the traditional repertoire, expertly and lushly played, lie in the separation between performing music and composing music that began at the turn of the century. The great piano, violin, and cello virtuosos and conductors of today no longer write music, with Boulez and Bernstein as two outstanding exceptions. Like Gustav Mahler and Richard Strauss, they have tried to balance their conducting and composing careers. Most conductors 70 years ago wrote music. Before 1914, instrumental virtuosos wrote music which they played at their concerts. These pieces were often showpieces for technical fireworks, and writing them required the technique of variation. Vladimir Horowitz and Fritz Kreisler have many such works to their names. Heifetz wrote pop songs under a pseudonym. All the great players of the 19th and early 20th centuries—pianists from

Nothing new under the conductor's baton.

ELEGANT REPETITIONS

By LEON BOTSTEIN

The 1981-1982 programs of our symphony orchestras reveal a familiar but disturbing pattern. Although America has perfected the orchestra and given it a contemporary lushness, brilliance, and power, the new programs of the major symphony orchestras will once again feature the older standard repertoire of the 19th and early 20th centuries.

The reasons for this unceasing diet of old music lie more in the music world than in the audience which is too often cited as the culprit. The elements of rhythm, pitch, and ensemble of much of contemporary music cut against the training and technical patterns most

familiar to the instrumentalist in our orchestras. Orchestral players, whether of the clarinet or violin, still learn their instruments with methods and studies written before 1914 that employ the musical language and style of late romanticism and earlier epochs. The finger patterns of the violinists in our major orchestras were acquired initially with études written before 1850. Today's dominant technical preparatory experience still trains the ear and finger together along patterns of pre-20th-century melody, harmony, and rhythm. The score and parts of a new Carter, Crumb, or Berio work, even a Bartók, Sessions, or Berg classic, pose more of a challenge to players. This reality has

Leon Botstein is president of Bard.

Beethoven, Chopin, and Clara Schumann to Busoni, Bartók, and Rachmaninov; violinists from Spohr to Ysaye; violinists like Hindemith; cellists like Casals—wrote music and advocated their own work. Performance and new creation were inextricably linked.

These performers approached the works of other composers with the passion, insight, and character of one who writes his own music. This stance, one entirely compatible with historic accuracy and performing traditions of a necessary kind, makes for readings of older and even overplayed works which strike the listener as new. Older music can then influence the formation of a future aesthetic. Bernstein's performance and recording of Beethoven's "Fidelio," like Boulez's version of Wagner's "Parsifal" of several years ago, a brilliant and effective if perhaps eccen-

tric reading, shows how familiar music can be redeemed from the clutches of the outstanding but routine performance. The attempt at writing new music for one's own time has been the most effective guardian against stale but elegant performances of old music.

Younger conductors and players like James Levine or Lynn Harrell lack even a minimal autobiographical link to that last generation for whom the music of Debussy or Tchaikovsky was genuinely contemporary and intensely personal. As music loses its contemporaneity, it easily becomes the target of academic treatment (as "dead") or of an obsessive allegiance to a particular, seemingly authentic interpretive stance.

The gulf between so-called serious music and popular music, which has grown wider since the days of Franz Lehar or even Kurt Weill, has aided the

trend toward conservative interpretations and orchestral programming. The repertoire of the coming season appeals to an artistic personality satisfied by immersion in the past, eager to maintain a distance from popular culture and to avoid artistic combat. The instinct for aesthetic refuge shared by many classical music performers means that their performances will not challenge or inspire this season's audience. Yet the audience will respond to new music—if it is played frequently—and to old music offered with an original and penetrating point of view. Our musicians—on the podium, in the players' chairs, and in the solo spotlight—ought to spare us this dullness. The talents of great soloists, gifted conductors, and the hundreds of superb players in our finest orchestras should not be squandered on repetition.

PORTRAIT OF A LADY KILLER

Mrs. Harris: The Death of the Scarsdale Diet Doctor by Diana Trilling

(Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 342 pp., \$14.95)

Not since the Manson trial exposed the violence of middle-class youth had a murder case so captured the imagination and the moment. To be sure, Joan Little, a black woman imprisoned for robbery, had won fame in 1977 for stabbing her jailer to death as he tried to rape her. That year, in Michigan, Francine Hughes had responded to years of her husband's abuse by saturating his bed with gasoline and setting it afire while he slept. Each woman had been acquitted; each had become emblematic of the refusal of rape victims or battered wives to remain passive victims. As the "aging" mistress about to be displaced by a younger woman, Jean Harris, the elegant 56-year-old headmistress of the Madeira School in Virginia, on trial for the murder of her 69-year-old lover, Herman Tarnower, seemed to bring that spirit of revolt to the world of privilege.

For many who followed Mrs. Harris's trial, the question of her guilt or innocence was less important than the legitimacy of what had happened to Tar-

nower. Mrs. Harris seemed to stand for those women who no longer wished to bear passively and decorously the psychological tortures of abandonment. Could she do for the emotionally battered what had been done for victims of physical violence? Would a jury view her confusion as compassionately as it had, in the celebrated cases of Little and Hughes, the desperation of the disadvantaged?

On trial, Mrs. Harris outraged such expectations. Her apparent refusal to permit her lawyer, Joel Aurnou, to be critical of her lover, her avowals of love for Tarnower, her denial of jealousy, her arrogance, her preference for self-dramatization over her own freedom: all made it clear that she was far more complex than a standard-bearer ought to be. Mrs. Harris led us into a labyrinth of sexual attachment and social climbing. Diana Trilling's *Mrs. Harris: The Death of the Scarsdale Diet Doctor* is an account of the trial and of Mrs. Trilling's journey through the maze of Mrs. Harris's life. It is the story of Mrs. Trilling's

assent, offered and withdrawn, as she measures Mrs. Harris against the evidence and tries her in the court of her own ideals. It is a riveting narrative, progressing by a sifting of fact and emotion toward the judgment of one woman by another.

Mrs. Trilling's Harris and Tarnower are lovers fueled by ambition, taking their ethic from the American dream as they help each other climb the social ladder. Jean Struven Harris is a lovely Episcopalian from a modestly situated Cleveland family which, impressed by her energy and ability, sent her to the best private schools. Graduating from Smith magna cum laude, Jean Harris married a man of modest means, had two sons, divorced, and supported herself and her children as a teacher, headmistress, and executive before becoming headmistress of the Madeira School, where she was known, not without affection, as Integrity Jean.

Herman Tarnower, a Jewish boy from Brooklyn, was the son of an East European immigrant. He graduated from

Syracuse University in a six-year program leading to a doctorate in medicine, specialized in internal medicine and cardiology, and established a practice in Westchester in the 1950s. There, Mrs. Trilling says, he "fixed his eye on the German-Jewish social peaks" at whose apex was the Century Country Club. Alone, he determinedly made a fourth at bridge at the home of wealthy German-Jewish widows, but "with a charming Gentile like Mrs. Harris at his side his continual social advance must have been assured." In turn, Jean Harris, who had moved among but was not of the circles of WASP privilege, found a place in the company of sophisticated, affluent Jewish couples. "Mrs. Harris was able to be of great social usefulness to Tarnower even while she was made to feel what was entirely so, that it was Tarnower who opened the social doors for her."

Mrs. Trilling writes from a vantage point outside of the struggle for social advantage. In her thoughtful, densely intelligent appraisals of Mrs. Harris and her lover, and in the authority of her previous books, she has established fair claim to represent the values of that "classless" class, those academics and intellectuals who eschew "worldliness" for the life of culture and an ethic outside of the marketplace. Mrs. Trilling sets out to analyze possible relationships between the life of culture and morality and life in the world, but her intellectual poise breaks down under the weight of a sweeping contempt for money and position.

Mrs. Trilling believes Mrs. Harris, "an academic," had no business knowing or wanting to know so many wealthy people. She accuses her of materialism, although Mrs. Harris lived on what she earned and profited little from her affair with Tarnower. Mrs. Trilling says that "the way in which taste is exercised . . .

is the firmest clue we have to how someone pursues his life in culture and therefore to the style of moral being he would legislate for us if he had the power." But she permits these lovers no "taste," responding to Mrs. Harris's mention of T. S. Eliot with the disdain of a woman who has found poachers on the family preserve: "why had these people moved in on Eliot this way?" She dismisses Tarnower's small house as in

well as sexual. It was not Mrs. Tryforos's existence as his mistress, but her emergence as Tarnower's public companion, that was the point of contention between Mrs. Harris and her lover. That he should have a decreasing need for a woman like Mrs. Harris and an increasing desire to display Mrs. Tryforos suggests he felt his search for social *éclat* was better served by the visibility of a woman whose assets were

physical, and whose presence confirmed his sexual vigor. If this is acquisitiveness or conspicuous consumption it is of a new sort, one made possible by current mores which enable the transfer of ambition from the old standard of money and position to the contemporary one of sexual plenitude.

Mrs. Trilling wryly dismisses Tarnower as having no "fate." Yet, in an almost classical sense, Tarnower's character was his fate; his need to be victor in both the class war and the sex war kept him a strategist rather than a full participant in his own life. He was both unable to accept an intimacy that involved the normal run of human troubles and to let go of the woman whose love and intelligence offered vindications of his emotional worth.

He could explain withdrawing his offer of marriage to Mrs. Harris by the good-times ethic: "I didn't want to worry about which retirement home your mother was in . . . and I didn't want to watch you die of cancer, and I didn't want you to play nursemaid to me. . . ." Yet in practice he could not let go of Mrs. Harris any more than she could let go of him. He sent her his manuscript, he took her on vacations, he supplied her with enough amphetamines and anti-depressants to create a drug dependency and tie her to him, if only as her supplier. When she came to him on March 10, anxious and suicidal, he could not comfort her, finally telling



PHOTOGRAPH OF JEAN HARRIS BY MARILYNNE HERBERT

"ostentatious bad taste," and describes it confusingly as a "Japanoid manifestation." Her distaste seems out of proportion to anything described as she concludes in a tone better suited to *Ecclesiastes* than to a book by one human being about others: "Could he or Mrs. Harris have known, could they have endured to know, how inglorious were the social heights to which they'd attained?"

Mrs. Trilling's sweeping disapproval prevents her from continuing her appraisal of Tarnower's social climbing and of the changes that occurred in his tastes after wealth and position were achieved. Surely Tarnower's growing preference for Mrs. Tryforos, Mrs. Harris's rival, may have been social as

her to "get out" because she was "crazy." In remaining, Mrs. Harris, wittingly or unwittingly, became his Nemesis in a drama that could be seen as a moral fable.

Mrs. Trilling's moral sharpness is an enabling factor in much of her meditation on Mrs. Harris, permitting her the insight that Mrs. Harris is a puritan, unsuited by upbringing and by temperament to the good-times ethic and the sexual competitiveness that marked her lover's household. But as she speaks of Mrs. Harris, it is clear that she presents not one but two moral puritans. Mrs. Trilling writes as one of the saved to one of the damned. Take her response to the pathetic "Scarsdale letter." In it Mrs. Harris informs Tarnower of her state at the time she had returned his \$35,000 engagement ring with a charming note, after he had withdrawn his offer of marriage. She tells him she had given up her children's scholarships, notifying their school she was marrying and moving away. When Tarnower changed his mind, it took her two years to have the scholarships reinstated and she had to meet the additional expenses from her gross yearly salary of \$12,000. Mrs. Trilling responds, addressing her remarks directly to Mrs. Harris:

She should herself be reminded that this supposed extreme of poverty was not too uncomfortably shared throughout the academic profession. Between 1966 and

1969 the basic salary of a full professor at Columbia College was \$14,000 and it was only in 1969 that it was raised to \$16,000. And those were days in which we climbed a long hill to reach this exalted rank.

Does this really do more than remind us that it is easier to live simply as the wife of a gifted and respected man, in an intimacy so complete one can refer to his professorship in the plural pronoun, than to be lonely, jilted, and further penalized to the amount of two scholarships? Surely if the elect choose to instruct the less fortunate, they should do so more charitably, secure in the knowledge that a convicted murderer has already lost any claim to success in the moral competition.

Mrs. Trilling's magisterial excesses interfere with, but do not eclipse, the quality of her portrait of Mrs. Harris. Ironically, they are part of its drama; they document the intense personal response aroused by the tragedy of Tarnower and Harris. Mrs. Trilling's severity is balanced by intellectual honesty and patience in sifting through the facts of the trial. Her comments on the guilty verdict delivered by the jury reflect her standards of fairness:

I'm afraid that on the basis of what I heard and observed in Mrs. Harris's trial, I find it entirely possible that Mrs. Harris murdered Tarnower. But 'possible' is not enough on which to convict a person of so serious a charge or any charge. Had I been on Mrs. Harris's jury I could not have voted as it did. . . . And yet, though I question the verdict against Mrs. Harris I have no doubt at all that deep in her mind and heart she wanted to kill Dr. Tarnower. I think her fury at him was murderous. . . . But if there'd ever been a time when the wish was conscious, this was no longer so. And it's conscious action that is judged in a court of law.

Mrs. Harris is the work of a seasoned writer with large resources of knowledge and intelligence. By force of her personality, Mrs. Trilling makes us see the essential disparities between the life of "authority," with its stabilities of affection and place, and the life of romantic risk. If she cannot give Mrs. Harris more than partial assent, she does bestow on her that love characterized by unfailing attentiveness. Her protectiveness is evident in her ability to fuse her moral and psychological views into this lyrical fatalism:

I think there remains a level, deep enough, on which she's always the brave wide-

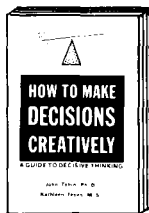
eyed provincial in a metropolis that should never have been opened up to her. There are people who were born to stay home rather than to follow the beckonings of their imaginations: the Emma Bovarys and Anna Kareninas of this world. If this is the counsel of their despair, it's also the counsel of their ultimate salvation.

What distinguishes Mrs. Harris from such romantic heroines is that she is alive, writing her own script. Like those aggressive heroines of Henry James (she has the sense of surfaces of a Madame Merle, the moral puritanism of an Isabel Archer, the generosity toward a flawed lover of a Milly Theale), she sees possibilities for self-transcendence in life as well as death. The measure of Mrs. Harris's romantic idealism cannot be taken without knowing the extent to which she wrote the script for her trial. Who determined that she would not make a psychiatric defense (such a defense saved Francine Hughes) or follow other lines of argument than she did? Who decided that her lawyer would request the jury not to consider a lesser charge, but to find her guilty or acquit her of second-degree murder? These questions remain unanswered. But Mrs. Harris's behavior, her apparent effort to "take over" her case, and the desire not simply to win a larger measure of freedom but to be judged innocent in an absolute sense, suggest that she was using the courtroom to accomplish some psychological goal not congruent with simply escaping punishment.

Mrs. Harris, I think, used the courtroom to stage her final public appearance with Herman Tarnower. She put the presentation of their romance ahead of her personal freedom. She cast Tarnower in the role of her savior, struggling to take from her the weapon that would end her life, and therefore dying that she might live. Her description of their final struggle bespoke the physical intensity of their encounters. Tarnower's death had clearly killed the feeble, fawning side of herself she must have wished to destroy in her suicidal anguish. Her arrogance to the prosecutor, her mastery of her "case," her need to appear "flawless," suggested she was shedding the vulnerable side of herself. In her commanding demeanor, her perfect grooming, her unfailing loyalty to Tarnower, she claimed him. She may never have been his wife, but in court she became his widow.

Mrs. Harris is the victim of that

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romantic and moral absolutism that cannot face chaos and ambivalence. She dealt with her emotional disorder by making it an armor of arrogance that could simulate the values embodied in the motto of the Madeira School: "Courage in adversity, finish in style." But she will not be permitted to "finish" in style. She may have cast herself as a Jamesean heroine, but her world has gone from James to Céline. On July 26 she was physically assaulted by another inmate and required infirmary treatment in

the Westchester prison where she is serving 15 years to life. Mrs. Harris has, to borrow Saul Bellow's phrase, met "the reality instructors."

JOSEPHINE HENDIN

Josephine Hendin teaches English at New York University. Her most recent book is *Vulnerable People: A View of American Fiction Since 1945* (Oxford University Press).

FAITH AND FANATICISM

Among The Believers: An Islamic Journey by V. S. Naipaul

(Knopf, 430 pp., \$15)

Between August 1979 and the following February, V. S. Naipaul went on a journey that took him to Iran, Pakistan, Malaysia, Indonesia, and back again to Iran. This account of his adventures takes us into a largely unfamiliar world that is deeply disturbed, and highly disturbing—especially since only yesterday Islam was thought to be on the whole open and accessible to outsiders and intent, seemingly, on adopting the political norms and cultural ideals of Western civilization. Leaving aside the question of whether such a goal was ever attainable, the consensus a 100 or even 50 years ago, both among knowledgeable observers and even educated Moslems, would have been that this indeed was the direction in which Islam was moving. But if we go by what is now happening in various parts of the Moslem world, from Algeria to Indonesia, we have to conclude that what yesterday was believed to be sound judgment has proved to be egregious misjudgment. What can possibly account for this remarkable reversal in the situation of Islam and in our view of it? Mr. Naipaul's vivid and felicitously written report, with its qualities of sensitive observation and sharp intelligence, may help us work out the rudiments of an answer.

The so-called revival of Islam, which fascinated Mr. Naipaul and led him to undertake his journey, has spread to so many areas and aroused such fer-

vent enthusiasm, thanks to the communications media. Flickering television images, evanescent words perpetually jostling one another on radio, and cheap and perishable newsprint have succeeded in binding the whole world together as though with bands of adamant. For example, in Jakarta Mr. Naipaul met the president of an important youth organization who was convinced that Islam was the great new movement in the world; it would win new converts everywhere.

Both *Time* and *Newsweek* had said so. And *Newsweek*, in a feature, had included the Prophet and one other Muslim in a list of fifty people who had most influenced the history of the world. 'It's in history now,' the young man said, meaning that it was only in *Newsweek*.

If *Time*, *Newsweek*, the *Economist*, etc., patronizingly issue a certificate of historical importance, this suddenly endows with universal significance, and sometimes even with existence, activities that otherwise would have remained confined to their provincial corner, conscious neither of their significance nor existence.

This, however, does not exhaust the irony. The movement for the revival of Islam is first and foremost a reaction against Western modes of life and thought. These modes are seen as alien and alienating, bringing in their train tension, frustration, and spiritual impoverishment to the lives of Moslems.

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But this manner of speaking is itself profoundly Western. It is an offshoot of that fashionable ideology that sees fulfillment and happiness in the quest, and achievement, of authenticity. The further irony, therefore, is that this search for authenticity is itself inauthentic. It is one of the many ironies incidental to the dialectic of cultural encounters, and to the unification of the world, Islam included, which in so many ways the West has, wittingly or not, brought about.

The ideal of authenticity, East or West, is a calamitous one. It belongs among that cluster of nihilistic aspirations which are so marked a feature of modern European culture. For authenticity to be really authentic it must effect a tabula rasa of existing institutions and relationships, and even of the actual self, infected as they must be with inauthenticity. Mr. Naipaul encounters this desperate and exasperated quest everywhere in his travels. The "passionate missionaries" of fundamentalism who spread out of Pakistan into Malaysia and Indonesia "do not bring news of military rule, the remittance economy, the loss of law"—all prominent features of Pakistan today. They "bring news only of Islam and the enemies of Islam," they "offer passion," and "the promise of political calamity spreads as good news." A mild and gentle young man in Pakistan declares: "*Millions* will have to die." A successful Western-educated businessman in Jakarta says: "We have to kill a lot of people. We have to kill one or two million of these Javanese." Everybody who had risen, like himself, had to be killed: everyone in the government, the good jobs, the universities, the nice houses. Again, Mr. Naipaul's guide in Iran, a young student, affirms that a lot of killing will have to be done: "We have to kill *all* the bourgeoisie."

The remarks of the Jakarta businessman merit further notice. The mass slaughter of Communists which took place in Indonesia in 1965 comes up in the conversation. It had been given out that half a million were wiped out, but the businessman corrects the statistic. The slaughter was much worse: it was really a million Communists who had been killed at that time.



MOHAMMED II COURTESY OF THE BETTMAN ARCHIVE

And more [he went on] should have been killed: there were two and a half million communists at the time. So a million and a half had escaped killing, and many of them were still around.

I said, 'If the killing starts, you may go yourself.'

'I might. I hope not. But I might.'

'I was told that in 1965 some people took out the gamelan when they went killing.'

'Of course. To add to the beauty.'

In trying to account for and justify these sanguinary impulses, these

dreams of death, destruction, and self-destruction, the Jakarta businessman has recourse to a bizarre analogy: "Islam," he declares, "can become a cocaine. It makes you high. You go to that mosque and you get high. And when you get high, everything that happens becomes Allah's will." It is safe to say that no Moslem, unless a follower of some disreputable heresy, would ever, in the past, have likened Islam to cocaine, or thought that prayer in a mosque makes the worshiper "get high." Such stridencies are far removed from traditional Islam as Mr. Naipaul encountered it at a saint's shrine in a remote corner of Sind:

In the dark tiled courtyard of the mosque there was music: the saint's 250-year-old devotional songs. And listening to the music at the end of the long day—a small crowd, some asleep, people coming and going—I felt . . . that Islam had achieved community and a kind of beauty, had given people a feeling of completeness.

The idea of Islam as cocaine would have also been rejected with horror by those Moslem leaders of the 19th and early 20th centuries, men like Sir Sayyid Ahmad Khan or Muhammad Rashid Rida, for whom Islam was a rational religion which, suitably reformed, could enable the believers to take their place and be at home in modern civil-

ization. This cocaine religion—all resentment, rage, anarchy—is one more product of the rancid ideological ferments that have wreaked havoc this century in Russia, Germany, and China. Arthur de Gobineau's prophetic words over 100 years ago when he warned of the dangers lurking in the contact between European ideas and Islam come to mind. "I am inclined to think," Gobineau wrote,

that the dangers for us will not be negligible. Not physical dangers: on this score we may rest easy, for the Asiatics have

no swords which can offer resistance to our bayonets. It is to moral dangers that I refer. In this great intellectual swamp some new combustion of principles, of ideas, of pestilential theories will take place, and the poison which it will produce will be transmitted by contact more or less quickly, but surely.

WHAT REVIVALISM seeks in essence is the "restoration" of an Islamic way of life as it is believed to have been at the time of the Prophet and his immediate successors. Whether or not early Islam corresponds to the image which the restorers have made for themselves, it remains the case that this so-called restoration is to be attempted on a body politic far removed, both in time and ethos, from early Islam; a body politic, moreover, which depends in a thousand ways on the Western civilization which is now to be systematically and ruthlessly rubbed out. This dependence dooms the attempt to paradox, to make-believe, and to what seekers after authenticity are used to calling *mauvaise foi*. Civilization is to be rejected, yet at the same time it should continue to supply not only seals of authentication but also goods and services on which even a restored and purified Islam has to depend, but which it cannot provide. Maulana Maudoodi, "the patron saint of the Islamic fundamentalists in Pakistan," died while Mr. Naipaul was visiting that country.

But he didn't die in Pakistan: the news of his death came from Boston. At the end of his long and cantankerous life the maulana had gone against all his high principles. He had entrusted himself to the skill and science of the civilization he had tried to shield his followers from. . . . Of the maulana it might be said that he had gone to his well-deserved place in heaven by way of Boston; and that he went at least part of the way by Boeing.

Again, in the heyday of Khomeini's revolution, a picture was widely reproduced showing a famous ayatollah, bayonet in hand, delivering the Friday sermon to multitudes assembled on the grounds of Tehran University. From the bayonet that he brandished to the microphone that amplified his voice, the turban that covered his head, and the socks and shoes that shod his feet, one wondered if there was a single item that did not originate in the West, and that, moreover, did not provide matter for his weekly diatribe against its corruption and decadence.

The West has probably ample enough shoulders to bear these denunciations, but what of those whose lives are controlled and regulated by the revivalists? Mr. Naipaul does not doubt that fundamentalism can provide a cozy cocoon for those who are disoriented and disheartened by the need to cope with modernity. But this kind of reaction to the outside world had not always characterized Islam: "In the days of Muslim glory Islam opened itself to the learning of the world. Now fundamentalism provides an intellectual thermostat, set low. It equalizes, comforts, shelters, and preserves." In a chapter entitled "Deschooling," Mr. Naipaul describes how this cocooning works in a village "school" run on fundamentalist lines:

The sufi centre turned school: the discipline of monks and dervishes applied to the young: it wasn't traditional, and it wasn't education. It was a breaking away from the Indonesian past; it was Islamization; it was stupefaction, greater than any that could have come with a Western-style curriculum. And yet it was attractive to the people concerned, because twisted up with it was the old monkish celebration of the idea of poverty: an idea which, applied to a school in Java in 1979, came out as little more than the poor teaching the poor to be poor.

Poverty as a way of life cannot ever be more than the (freely chosen) vocation of a small number of people who forsake the world in order to devote themselves wholly to the contemplative life. It is impracticable, paradoxical, and ultimately self-destructive to force a whole society in this direction. Mr. Naipaul's book vividly illustrates the spiritual discomfort, uneasiness, anxiety, and fear that the fundamentalist enterprise has spread wherever it has become powerful. Time and again he shows us educated men, sincere in their Islam, who had looked forward to great things from the religious restoration now in the grip of anguish at the unexpected consequences of that for which they had yearned. He remarks, apropos of Pakistan, on the impossibility of carrying on the intellectual activity on which a successful and prosperous civilization depends in a country where

in the name of an Islam that was not to be questioned, the whipping vans were to go out, official photographs were to be issued of public floggings, and one of the country's best journalists was to be arrested and photographs were to show him in chains.

Mr. Naipaul subtitles the section on Pakistan "The Salt Hills of a Dream." It could have served very well as the title of the whole work, particularly in view of the blood-letting that Iran has suffered since the book was written.

The whipping vans in Pakistan, the killings in Iran, are part of what Mr. Naipaul calls "the thuggish public life of the Muslim polity." The dialectic leading to this thuggishness begins with the need to assert the primacy of the faith—a primacy which men, in their weakness and backsliding, had lost sight of. The rules of the faith had, therefore, to be enforced once more with the overriding object of creating, or recreating, a society of believers. This meant no alcohol, no feminine immodesty, no interest at the banks. But it also meant no political parties, no dissent, no law courts. Practically all the political institutions of a populous, settled, and sophisticated society were undermined, discredited, and destroyed, replaced in Iran by the fiat of a divine, and in Pakistan by that of a general:

The faith was full of rules. In politics there were none. There were no political



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rules because the faith was meant to create only believers. The faith could not acknowledge secular associations or divisions. For everyone in political life Islam was cause, tool and absolution. It could lead to this worldly virulence.

This picture of Islam today is so very disturbing. There is little doubt that it is a faithful report of the real state of affairs as it exists in the countries that Mr. Naipaul has visited, and, *grosso modo*, as well in some others which he did not visit. Few could have foreseen all this as an outcome of the fateful encounter between Islam and the West. How it in fact came about is both complex and

obscure, and how it will affect the relations of a sizable part of humanity with their fellowmen is even more obscure. *Among The Believers* does not tackle these issues, nor is it meant to. But there can be no doubt that it is the most notable work on contemporary Islam to have appeared in a very long time.

ELIE KEDOURIE

Elie Kedourie is professor of politics at the London School of Economics. His most recent book is *Islam in the Modern World* (Holt, Rinehart and Winston).

of the great event of modern Western art history, the beginning of the true Renaissance around 1400. It was certainly the essential element in the background of the strong taste for classical art of the pioneer artists of the true Renaissance, Brunelleschi, Ghiberti, and Donatello, and of classical art's influence on these artists and their art. Both Donatello and Ghiberti formed classical art collections themselves, no doubt for studio use primarily. They further set the example, together with the humanist collectors like Niccolò Niccoli and Poggio Bracciolini, which was then followed by Cosimo de' Medici and a whole series of subsequent Italian magnate-collectors. By the end of the 15th century, an Italian magnate with any pretensions to high taste was all but certain to own a few classical works, and some had huge and much admired collections. Thus the process that was to dot the whole of Europe from St. Petersburg to London, from Berlin to Madrid, with echoing galleries of classical marbles, had already reached its first maturity in Italy before 1500.

Professor Haskell and his collaborator have nonetheless chosen the year 1500 as the opening date of their study for a good enough reason. The evidence is abundant that there were substantial collections of classical sculpture, carved gems, medals, and coins in Italy before 1500, but a remarkably small number of these early collectors' prizes can be identified today, although a few have been found. In the later 15th century, for example, Lorenzo de' Medici ("the Magnificent") paid 50 florins (two-thirds more than the estimated value of the most valuable of the several Donatellos listed in the posthumous inventory of Lorenzo's palace) for a smallish marble of fauns attacked by serpents, which clandestine diggers in Rome had snatched for Lorenzo under the eager and commanding nose of the future Pope Julius II. This little statue, or a version of it, was spotted by Arnold

A REVOLUTION IN TASTE

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by Francis Haskell and Nicholas Penny

(Yale University Press, 376 pp., \$45)

This book is a triple rarity. It is lucid and readable, but also impeccably scholarly. It deals with a major but almost unexplored subject, although there are precious few new subjects left to explore in the field of Western art history. And this strangely neglected subject, an absolutely major episode in the development of our art, is so successfully dealt with that the book is due to become a standard authority.

If *Taste and Antique* has a fault, in fact, it is the decision to omit the beginning and to abbreviate the end of the story it tells. One cannot quarrel with Francis Haskell and Nicholas Penny for doing this, since their intended scope is announced by their subtitle, which is "The Lure of Classical Sculpture, 1500-1900." Scholars must always be free to impose such limitations on their work, provided they are frank about it. Yet it may help nonspecialist readers to appreciate a richly rewarding book if the story's beginning is summarized here.

Shortly after 1300, in brief, the curious social habit of art collecting was obscurely reborn in Italy. The first proto-modern collector we now know about was Oliviero Forzetta, a highly successful money lender in Treviso in the Veneto, and the things he collected were classical works of art. This devel-

opment was remarkable in itself. Throughout the Dark and Middle Ages, art collecting had disappeared as a social habit. Classical works of art, too, while always admired by some for their truth to nature and the skill of their makers, were nonetheless regularly deplored as images of demons and therefore demon-tinctured. Both a radical rejection of this former view of classical art and the rebirth of art collecting as a social habit were in fact announced by the unprecedented activities of Forzetta and the later 14th-century collectors of the same sort.

The reappraisal of classical art that started in the 14th century was furthermore linked to two more fundamental processes, the rebirth of classical studies and the new approach to history which Petrarch largely originated. If you agreed with Petrarch that the Dark Ages began with the Emperor Constantine's conversion to Christianity (a surprising view in itself, since Petrarch was a conventionally devout man), it was only natural to worry no longer about the demonic aspect of classical art. Thus collecting classical art had become an established albeit elite pursuit by the later 14th century.

This development, it seems to me, was an essential part of the background



COMING

R.W.B. Lewis

on the James family.

Schaber in a private collection years ago, but has disappeared from sight again. With no more than one or two exceptions like the Belvedere *Torso*, however, no piece of classical sculpture from a 15th-century collection was destined to attain the enormous, Europe-wide fame, or to inspire the breathless admiration of both artists and art lovers, of the 100 pieces and fragments of classical sculpture that are studied in detail in *Taste and the Antique*.

The book's main thrust is to remind art lovers and aesthetic theorists of the later 20th century that certain pieces of classical sculpture, now almost forgotten, were absolutely central to Western aesthetic experience for close to 400 years—in fact from about 1500 until late in the 19th century. New discoveries slowly increased the total until it reached 100 statues by the 19th century.

The Haskell-Penny reminder of the former standing of these 100 statues is offered with great eloquence and with all the significant facts lucidly set forth. In the long introductory essay, everything any sane man could wish to know—and much that has not been well known before—is provided for the reader and the scholar. How people felt and wrote about the statues covered; what they were taken to be; how these particular statues became so enormously celebrated; the guidebooks from the very beginning; the appreciations in print by connoisseurs and art historians; the engravings and the like that made the statues familiar images to the hundreds of thousands of art lovers in every generation who never laid eyes on them—all this and more is there. This essay section of the book is then followed by an equally important and finely organized illustrated catalogue, with the provenance and date of discovery of each of the 100

statues so far as these are still possible to ascertain, with the interpretations of each statue by successive generations of art theorists and scholars, with the repairs where these are important (and sometimes they amounted to the creation of brand-new works of art), and with the classification of each statue by the leading modern historians of classical art. The data are invaluable, and the resulting reminder is immensely salutary.



PHOTOGRAPH OF THE APOLLO BELVEDERE FROM 'TASTE AND THE ANTIQUE'

The reminder is salutary, in turn, because the artists and art lovers, theorists and critics of the later 20th century find it so hard to believe that such works of art really were central to Western aesthetic experience for so many centuries; and being incredulous, therefore tend to misinterpret the past history of our own art tradition. In this connection, one may pass over (although it is not justifiable to do so) the fierce competition of collectors rich and grand enough to aim for the highest prizes;

the almost standardized ecstasies to which art lovers were inspired by the statues chosen for study by Francis Haskell and Nicholas Penny; the astonishing doings of the dealers supplying the collectors; the pride of place invariably given to such works of art in the collections of magnates and princes. But one cannot pass over the artists themselves and above all, the impact on the artists' modes of creation, of classical art as it was then understood and typified by these 100 statues.

The artists' responses are recorded from the dawn of the true Renaissance. Look, for instance, at the Haskell-Penny illustration of the Louvre *Hermaphrodite*, a Greco-Roman marble copy of a Hellenistic bronze of a sleeping ithyphallic adolescent with a woman's bottom and breasts. If anyone can be profoundly moved by this marble today, he or she is likely to be more than a mite peculiar. Yet Lorenzo Ghiberti saw a very similar *Hermaphrodite* just after it was found in Rome, and was dazzled by its "perfection." He even wrote that you could not understand its subtleties without passing your hand over it. By 1500, moreover, the "ancients," as represented by such works as Ghiberti's *Hermaphrodite* and the *Apollo Belvedere*, were the universally accepted and primordial canonical masters of Western art.

And it is a truism of art history that from Raphael and Michelangelo to David and Ingres, most of the greatest artists of the Western art tradition regarded the "ancients" as their exemplars and were more or less profoundly influenced by what they knew of their art.

Furthermore, Rembrandt's failure to feel the influence of classical art was the chief reason the modern saint of art was never admitted to the critics' inner Pantheon until the former standards of

supreme excellence had begun to be abandoned in the 19th century. The 18th-century Parisian connoisseur-critic-art dealer Quentin de Lorangère, for instance, was a passionate enthusiast who held that Rembrandt was the unique self-made great master of the first order in the whole story of Western art. But he deplored Rembrandt's decision not to go to Italy to study the works of the "ancients" (as Constantijn Huygens had vainly urged him to do when he was a young man); and he held that even Rembrandt's towering genius had not prevented his nudes from "giving you the horrors," because the nudes, particularly, showed the effects of his deficient acquaintance with classical art.

What makes this past state of affairs downright bewildering nowadays is the character of the classical works of art which played so enormous a role in art and taste. Look at the 100 statues chosen for the Haskell-Penny list. Among those placed in the most conspicuous niches in the former Western *Musée Imaginaire* before the opening of the 19th century, you will not find a single Greek original of the sort we admire today. The vast majority, like the *Apollo Belvedere* (which according to Kenneth Clark was the "most admired statue in the world" for nearly four centuries), are quasi-mechanical Greco-Roman copies in marble of Greek works in bronze, made for the Roman market

in commercial statuary workshops hundreds of years after the originals first saw the light of day. Some of these statues, like the *Farnese Hercules*, are plain repulsive, and some, like the *Farnese Bull*, are plain ludicrous. Even the best of them cannot imaginably call forth the combined awe and adoration which was the standard response of art lovers of the past.

In short, *Taste and the Antique* is a double reminder. The book reminds us that the universally acknowledged standards of Western art during our art's most creative centuries were not in the least like the standards prevailing today—to the extent that our art can be said to have standards of any recognizable kind in the later 20th century. And the book reminds us, second, that all of us today are quite unable to perceive or to respond to works of art as our forefathers, including most of the greatest artists of our forefathers' generations, formerly perceived and responded to them.

This may be good, or it may be bad. Speaking for myself, I cannot regret the collapse of the formerly prevailing standards of art, simply because this is how all of us are now able to perceive and respond to the marvels of the art of our own tradition in the two centuries before the High Renaissance, and of Gothic and Romanesque art, and of the arts of all the non-Western cultures whose remains survive to speak to us.

The collapse of the old standards has in truth enormously extended the range of experienced delight. And it seems to me that being unable to understand what Goethe saw in the *Apollo Belvedere* is a small price to pay for the emotion that any modern man of average sensibility experiences, for example, on first seeing the great Christ within His mandorla of the Romanesque tympanum at Autun. Yet this was plastered over, as really too unbearably ugly, by the local ecclesiastical authorities in the 18th century.

Nor can one complain that Professor Haskell and his collaborator have dealt in an extremely summary way with the great change that has now relegated the *Apollo Belvedere* to the basement of the Western Museum of the

Imagination, and replaced the Apollo in the main classical gallery with such Greek originals as the Delphic *Charioteer* and the Piraeus *Apollo*. They take note of the two first stages, which were Johann Joachim Winckelmann's mid-18th century proclamation of the absolute primacy of Greek art, and Lord Elgin's importation of most of the Parthenon marbles to London in the first years of the 19th century. Winckelmann's proclamation was transforming, because imperial Rome had previously been regarded by most people as art's grand fount and center. The arrival of Lord Elgin's marbles in London was transforming, too, because Lord Elgin thus confronted the art lovers of Europe with the first large group of Greek originals of a great period they had ever seen. The subsequent complete revision of the former view of classical art was inevitable but also remarkably slow, as Professor Haskell and his collaborator point out. To have gone further, tracing each stage of the slow abandonment of the Greco-Roman copies for Greek originals during the 19th century, would have demanded a book rather tediously expanded by about one-half.

It should be added that this process of revision of the former view of classical art was only one of three schematically similar processes of revision. The second was the Gothic revival and the third was the renewal of interest in the great 14th and 15th century Italian masters from Giotto and Cimabue down to Botticelli and Ghirlandaio. These were also radical revisions, since Gothic art had been commonly held to be "barbarous" since the 15th century in Italy, and art itself had been held to begin with the masters of the High Renaissance—which meant the earlier masters were regarded as hardly more than historically significant. All these processes of revision obscurely started—can it have been by sheer coincidence?—at about the same time, toward the middle of the 18th century, and all three went forward together in parallel until the old standards of art had collapsed for good, at any time in the later 19th century you choose to name.

The collapse of the old standards in turn opened men's eyes, successively but in the end comprehensively, to the glories and achievements of all the non-Western art traditions whose products are still known to us. And more important, the way was also opened for the

SUMMER GARDEN SURVIVORS

Flushed and fat as Falstaff, a tomato has lowered its weight by the vine into the gullies of this garden where it reclines with splitting seams to drink of the sun yet one more round. The brussels sprouts also survive, rare jaded snails spiraling in chilled succession toward the top of center stalk. Pumpkins are more gregarious. Along the rumpled field in groups, they settle like one enormous family, tilting their uncarved faces as if to smile on one another. Next to the soil, a cabbage, holding the separate versions of herself in layered moon-grey leaves, unfolds them for the frost, encroaching, and the snow's cool clasp.

GINA WHITE

modern masters from the Impressionists and Cézanne and Renoir, through the great post-Impressionists of the early decades of the 20th century, and down to the present. But this vast upheaval in the modes of creation and the ways of perceiving works of art, in the fundamentals of aesthetics and the aims of art, will some day require another very long book for a mere preliminary exploration. Meanwhile the Haskell-Penny volume, with its profusion of needed data and its clarity of presentation, is a long and invaluable

step along the road toward a comprehensive study of all aspects of the great change of the 19th century plus all its consequences, so novel, so vital, yet so foolishly taken for granted by all and sundry.

JOSEPH ALSOP

Joseph Alsop, the former columnist, has been at work for 18 years on a comprehensive history of art collecting, *The Rare Art Traditions*, which will be published next spring by Harper and Row.

LITERATE WIT

The Last Laugh by S. J. Perelman

(Simon & Schuster, 192 pp., \$12.95)

I have always been grateful for two books I discovered in my parents' library during my early adolescence. The first was a sober black volume whose fastidious line drawings provided me with lasting insights into the sexual reproductive process which, although I was not to apply them fully for several years, were still a comfort in the days before *Hustler* and *The Joy of Sex* were readily available for pubescent perusal. The second was no less titillating, but in a different way. It was a 1958 first edition of Simon & Schuster's *The Most of S. J. Perelman*. That book's spell over me can be adequately measured only by the admission that I once felt the effect of one of Perelman's *feuilletons*, as he liked to call his humorous 1,500 word sprints, trickling down my right pant leg. I have grown more continent in the years since, but I recently startled myself with my own laughter when I came across the offending passage again:

The whistle shrilled and in a moment I was chugging out of Grand Central's dreaming spires followed by the anguished cries of relatives who would now have to go to work. I had chugged only a few feet when I realized that I had left without the train, so I had to run back and wait for it to start.

Perelman's verbal slapstick was the device most accessible to a 13-year-old; it wasn't until later that I was able to respond to his astonishing array of

comic tools, some of which he himself described as "my preoccupation with clichés, baroque language, and the elegant variation." And only now, reading *The Last Laugh*, which appears a year and a half after Perelman's death, have I considered the real, concealed value of his work. Parents could do far worse than to leave *The Most of S. J. Perelman* lying around the house, because its author demonstrates that it is possible to be funny and write well at the same time, a lesson that is not to be taken lightly in an age when so much humor—whether in print, the movies, or on television—has segregated itself from the literary by its predictability and its graceless pandering to the easy guffaw. The immense popularity of current cartoon books like *101 Uses For A Dead Cat* implies that to an inarticulate, visual generation, humor is less and less a matter of language.

By contrast, Perelman's sentences, however ornamented or clogged with relative clauses, are as well tailored as were his Savile Row tweeds. His vocabulary is so large as to be fetishistic; it combines the arcane and idiomatic without the sesquipedalian. Even in his lesser pieces, which resemble private gardens overgrown with silly vegetation, the lines are always tended with a Flaubertian care. Countless writers who have done time in Hollywood, where literary quality makes its presence known as

often as snow, never recovered; but one gets the feeling that Perelman's screen-writing years there, between 1931 and 1942, only steeled his commitment to the printed word. Those years may also have contributed to his fearlessness about revision; when the *Paris Review* asked him in the early 1960s how many drafts of a story he did, he replied:

Thirty-seven. I once tried doing thirty-three, but something was lacking, a certain—how shall I say?—*je ne sais quoi*. On another occasion, I tried forty-two versions, but the final effect was too lapidary—you know what I mean, Jack? What the hell are you trying to extort—my trade secrets?

Behind the archness of that response lies the touchiness of a man who has labored hard to create such frivolous pleasures. His defensiveness was not unwarranted; but that he was reproached so frequently for not writing longer, or more seriously ("I am content to stitch away at my embroidery hoop," he told the *Paris Review*), was a sign that his best critics justly recognized in his style the weapons of a fiction writer capable of Jamesian observation—even if he produced no evidence of the ability or willingness to develop his characters.

IN ADDITION to 17 short pieces, *The Last Laugh* contains four chapters from his proposed autobiography, *The Hindsight Saga*—three of them reminiscences of the Marx Brothers, Dorothy Parker, and his brother-in-law Nathaniel West. These shards of a more substantial literary undertaking have prompted some of Perelman's admirers to rejoice. "Even in its fragmentary state," proclaimed Tom Wolfe in the *New York Times Book Review*, "*The Hindsight Saga* strikes me as the best thing Perelman ever wrote." But that is as insulting as applauding a knuckleball pitcher only for the occasional fastball he throws to keep batters off balance. Although the autobiographical excerpts are portraits rendered with typical Perelmanesque finesse ("... a cretin I was certain I had never seen before...") and metaphorical exactitude ("Nobody has yet ascertained why poets affect neckwear that has the texture of caterpillars"), it is the fluttery but well-aimed knuckler, which only looks easy, that Perelman was born to throw. Perelman may have referred to himself as "a species of journalist," but his reportorial genius was for a world located more in his querulous imagination than

anywhere else. Newspaper fillers, advertisements, and well-wishers supplied him with the bulk of his pieces' comic germs, and *The Last Laugh* again shows what happens to them after incubating in a mind so fine that every idea violated it. Whether or not Perelman was a true satirist (the issue is often debated), his work demonstrates the link between humor and venom; of the latter, he sometimes discharged so much, particularly where Hollywood was concerned, that one occasionally feels the target is being overcomplimented.

I don't know whether it is a question of my advancing age, or his, but in *The Last Laugh* Perelman does seem to miss the strike zone more than usual. He is so adept at putting spin on clichés that when he doesn't ("Since its patrons were packed as tightly as sardines. . .") one feels that something has gone wrong. There are the usual contorted leads, connected to the body of his pieces by tenuous threads, that lend his tales the right offhand air, but he proves too often in his collection how baffled he was by endings. He makes too much of obscure references that only his contemporaries can appreciate. And then there are his women; he was never very good at rescuing them from hard-boiled stereotype. From *The Last Laugh* we get: " . . . a bevy of dynamite chicks . . ."; "The production starred a Danish actress of surpassing loveliness named Betty Nansen—unrelated to the Arctic explorer, except that her beauty froze me in my chair"; and "Bunny was

dark and vivid—lots of eyeshadow and lipstick—with a divine figure, the kind that makes men yearn to wrap its possessor in twenty-thousand-dollar sable coats." Not only are these descriptions facile, but they pale compared to a passage in his famous Raymond Chandler parody, "Farewell, My Lovely, Appetizer," where he spoofs Chandler's—and, perhaps, unintentionally, his own—female portraiture:

'I could go for you, sugar,' I said slowly. . . . I stared at her ears, liking the way they were joined to her head. There was something complete about them; you knew they were there for keeps. When you're a private eye, you want things to stay put.

DESPITE HIS limitations (like magicians, humorists often seem merely to be keeping up the patter while preparing their various tricks), Perelman still brought to humor-writing a suppleness and color—*brio* was his term—beyond the reach of most contemporary writers. The prevailing taste these days in humor, even in Perelman's old meal ticket, the *New Yorker*, is for a dry, laconic texture, as though the whimsy were strained through Samuel Beckett or a government report. Like Perelman, many humorists today derive their voices in part from commercial and bureaucratic idioms, but the product gives the impression of being assembled rather than written. Even Woody Allen relies on non sequitur (usually involving the sudden intrusion of food) and bathetic aphorisms ("After death, is it still possible to take showers?") whereas Perelman always strove to be funny in the context of narrative; that is, you feel with Perelman that even if the best "lines" were removed, you'd still enjoy the story. Of course, he can ramble on—to the extent that this is possible in 1,500 or 2,000 words—but where so much modern humor depends on the suppression of language, Perelman honored, at every turn, its flexibility.

The piece that caused me, as Perelman might say, to micturate in my pants as a teenager was a sketch from the 1930s called "Strictly From Hunger"; it describes his mother packing him off to California:

'Oh, son, I wish you hadn't become a scenario writer!' she sniffled.

'Aw, now, Moms,' I comforted her, 'it's not worse than playing the piano in a call house.'

It was almost the exact phrase he used a quarter of a century later to parry a *Paris Review* question about his real Hollywood screenwriting experiences. To those who suggest that, in not writing a "serious" book, Perelman was also in some way prostituting his talent, I would argue that in almost everything he wrote he never played anything less than a baby grand.

R. D. ROSEN

R. D. Rosen is the author of *Psychobabble: Fast Talk and Quick Cure in the Era of Feeling* (Atheneum) and the television critic for the *Boston Phoenix*.

BRIEF REVIEW

Golden Girl
by Juan Marsé
translated by Helen R. Lane
(Little, Brown and Co., 204 pp., \$10.95)

Juan Marsé, whose novels *The Fallen* (1979) and now *Golden Girl* have been translated into English, is one of Spain's richest novelists in both senses of the word. He writes lush and evocative tales about life under Franco which also win the best prizes: *Golden Girl* received Spain's highly lucrative and prestigious *Planeta* award. A volatile mixture of politics and eroticism makes up the explosive surface of *Golden Girl*. As in *The Fallen*, however, the underlying subject matter is the old enigma of Spanish culture, the Minotaur of reality and illusion that haunts the works of Cervantes, Velázquez, Calderón, and Picasso.

Luys Forest, a 60-year-old Falangist (fascist) historian and novelist, who by his own admission had "for so many years penned false versions of events" to whitewash the Franco regime and the Falangist cause, has retreated to his old family home on the coast near Barcelona to write his autobiography, when his attractive young niece Mariana shows up to interview him for a magazine article. As Mariana smokes marijuana and Forest sips whiskey in nightly sessions, she questions him and criticizes sections of his memoirs that she has typed for him that day. As the intimacy—and sexual tension—between them grows, we learn that Forest's

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memoirs do not describe events as he remembers them but as he thinks they ought to have been. As he fatuously tells Mariana: "I'm not trying to mirror life as it actually is or was; what I'm trying to do is change it for the better." To himself he admits that the secret motive behind these imaginary episodes is "justifying myself."

Mariana is an insouciant nymph who alternately carries on with her friend Elmyr (who turns out to be female) and makes lurid suggestions to her uncle. Forest is an inveterate fabricator who has lived with lies for so long he cannot make a truthful statement. She is a child of post-Franco Spain. He is a burnt-out chronicler of a defunct regime turning on his past, describing his old comrades in their sinister dark glasses as "shameful *lotophagi*—eaters of the flower of forgetfulness." But Mariana and Forest are guilty of the same sin, she for refusing through her self-indulgence to acknowledge Spain's past, he through his self-deception for refusing to remember it.

Beneath the overtly political and sexual turmoil of *Golden Girl*, something far more sinister is at work. As the novel progresses, objects from the fabricated memoirs begin to turn up around Forest's house. He invents a disease for his wife and meticulously documents what kind of medicine she would have taken in 1948. Then, to Forest's consternation, his dog digs up a little pink cardboard box dated 10/7/48, labeled with the precise prescription his research had uncovered. To Forest's increasing horror his "inventions" turn out to be true.

Marsé's masterfully baroque manipulation of events as they were ("the incontrovertible reality of the past," as he phrases it), and events as they are remembered, meshes perfectly with what we have come to expect from the best of Spanish-language novelists. *Golden Girl*, in a fine translation by Helen R. Lane, is metafiction at its most tantalizing. Without bludgeoning the reader with literary or political dogma, Marsé gives us a powerful lesson in the value of art by demonstrating ironically how in Franco's Spain the burden of guilt turned truth into fiction and ultimately fiction into the shattering truth.

ALLEN JOSEPHS

Allen Josephs is professor of Spanish at the University of West Florida.

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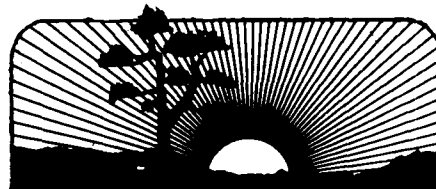
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Contradictions

CHILDREN ASK the question this way: how can we eat steak while children in India go hungry? The question came to me somewhat differently while listening to Handel's "Acis and Galatea" at the Kennedy Center and thinking of the squalor and helplessness not two miles away on 14th Street in Washington. How to justify privilege in the midst of suffering? Mao and particularly his ex-actress wife, Jiang Qing, thought it impossible. For them, it was an intolerable contradiction (what we would call a moral outrage) for culture to coexist with suffering. They devised a novel solution to the problem. Having failed to eradicate suffering, they chose instead to eradicate culture. And more than culture: beauty, too. Opera, music, poetry, and art that were not wholly dedicated to revolution (i.e., the eradication of suffering) were outlawed. Even the display of color was considered criminal. One survivor of the cultural revolution tells of secretly tending a flower at great risk of discovery by Red Guards.

AT THE North-South summit being held in Cancún, Mexico, the question will be posed again: how can some live in plenty, even luxury, while most live in poverty? President Nyerere of Tanzania, an admirer of China, was also justifiably scandalized by the coexistence of wealth and poverty in his country. The solution he proposed, and imposed—African socialism—derived not solely from economic theory but from a moral vision. Unfortunately, the village collectives that Nyerere established did not abolish poverty. They succeeded only in abolishing what little wealth Tanzania had. Tanzania, once self-sufficient in agriculture, is now a huge net importer of food and a ward of the World Bank. But the leveling did produce a kind of melancholy fairness, a more equal distribution of life's sorrows. That is a moral triumph of sorts, one solution for those who will not accept the moral contradictions of this world. I once knew another man who was also greatly troubled by these contradictions. He was a patient of mine, a gentle soul who heard the cries of animals in the slaughterhouse and wept when he read of traffic deaths in the newspaper. Not being a world leader, there was nothing he could do to help.

For months, years, he never left his room. That was a kind of solution, too.

AT CANCÚN it will be said that the West is responsible for world poverty (see "The North-South Nexus," page 5). In one version heavy blame will be placed on defense spending. As Willy Brandt pointedly wrote in the introduction to his North-South Report, what the U.S. spends on one jet fighter could be used to build 40,000 pharmacies in the third world. His argument presupposes the absence of any need for that jet fighter. If that were the case it would indeed be criminal for us not to build pharmacies instead. However, our experience in the world is that there are people who would do others harm if they had the opportunity. And when they mass their tanks on the border of, say, the Sudan or Poland, they are unlikely to be deterred by the sight of 40,000 pharmacies on the other side.

EVERY ONCE IN A WHILE the world stages a titanic showdown between East and West. The Berlin blockade and the Cuban missile crisis proved that these can be dangerous. So now we try to substitute games for the real thing. In the United States we tend to view the Olympics as the moral equivalent of war. In Russia it is chess. While Americans are distracted by assassinations and threats of war in the Middle East, Russians have their eyes fixed squarely on Merano, Italy, where the world chess championship is being decided. Ask an American what is happening now in Merano, Italy, and he will probably say the spaghetti harvest. Ask him who Victor Korchnoi is, and he will probably say second secretary of the Polish Communist Party. But the average Soviet citizen knows that Korchnoi is challenging the Russian world champion, Anatoly Karpov, for the title. For the Russians, a Karpov defeat would be a national calamity comparable to the New York Yankees losing the World Series to a Cuban team, with Fidel Castro pitching. Only worse. Korchnoi is a Soviet defector. Since the Soviets won't let his son and wife out of Russia, Korchnoi has become fanatically anti-Soviet. (Fanaticism comes easily to chess geniuses.) Add that to his already irascible, impossible personality, and it

makes him the Philip Agee of the Soviet world. On the other hand, Anatoly Karpov is the ultimate Soviet chess master: cool, methodical, technically brilliant over the board and ideologically pliant away from it. In the words of the *New York Times*, "the very model of the Soviet New Man." For those who care about preventing world war, victory for Karpov would probably be a good thing. It would be just the lift the Soviets need to help them forget Poland. (Remember that the Russians wisely let our hockey team beat theirs in the 1980 Olympics to make up for Afghanistan and to keep us from getting too dangerously depressed over the hostage crisis.) Unfortunately, Korchnoi hates the Russians too much to be persuaded to throw the match in the name of peace.

FOR THOSE who care only about chess, it doesn't matter who wins. The thrill is to witness the struggle between the two best chess players in the world. Most people don't understand that what distinguishes these two minds from the four billion others on the planet is not some superior combinative ability. It is not that they can see 12 moves ahead whereas you and I can see only four. What the grand masters have that *patzers* don't is a profound understanding of the meaning of position. They can look at an array of pieces on the board and see in their structural relationship imminent power, potential energy, what George Steiner calls fields of force. To plan farsighted combinations is virtuosity; to see deeply into the possibilities of position is genius. And a fearful genius at that. Paul Morphy, the best American chess player of the 19th century, quite literally went mad. Bobby Fischer, probably the greatest chess player in history, has withdrawn from the world, joined an obscure religious sect, and has not played a single game that we know of since he won the 1972 world championship in Iceland. To study some of Fischer's games is to catch a glimpse of the awesome visions he had over the board. No one knows why Fischer has never played again. I suspect that although he may not hear the cries from the slaughterhouse, he is another one of those who sees too much.

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